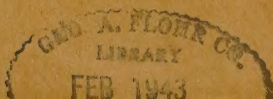


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Principally

ANSKRIT, GREEK, AND ROMAN

With some account of the

PERSIAN, CHINESE, AND JAPANESE

In the form of

Sketches of the Author's and Specimens from
Translations of their Works

BY

C. A. WHITE

Author of "The Students' Mythology"



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1878

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PREFACE.

THE present work has been prepared at the request of the principals of several leading educational institutions. They have long felt the want of a text-book which would contain, within a reasonable compass, sketches of the great authors of antiquity, with such extracts as might give a fair idea of the style and spirit of their writings. The Greek and Latin languages are generally taught in our higher schools, but we know from experience how very limited is the number of students who acquire or retain that familiarity with these tongues which would enable them to read, appreciatively, any of the great classics. In view of this, no pains have been spared to obtain such translations as nearest approach the spirit of the original, and it is hoped that the general reader, as well as the student, may find both pleasure and profit in their perusal.

When we speak of the CLASSIC LITERATURE as a *text-book*, that term must not be understood in the same sense as when used with regard to a geography, or a work on natural philosophy. In these, large portions of the text must be committed to memory, and they necessarily count among the daily tasks of school. In the academies for which this work was originally projected, literature is taught by reading rather than study, and the teacher, when satisfied that the

pupil retains a clear and intelligent idea of the whole, requires no formal recitation. It is therefore believed that it will be found attractive as a Classic Reader in schools where no allotted time can be given to this branch of education.

In view of the vast field which such a subject presents, many authors of secondary rank have been either passed over in silence, or have received but a brief notice. For the same reason we have confined ourselves strictly to the ancient pagan classics, as any account of the Christian writers of the first centuries of our era would have extended the work beyond practicable limits. The best authorities have been consulted throughout, and quotations, when made, will be found duly credited.

We have experienced much pleasure in the preparation of the present work. If this feeling be in any manner reciprocated, and if the interest of the young student should be awakened and directed to the higher walks of literature, we shall feel that our labor which has not been slight, is amply repaid.

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CLASSIC LITERATURE.

INTRODUCTION.

GENERAL DIVISION OF LANGUAGE.

AMONG the various classifications made by modern philologists, the most convenient is, perhaps, that which divides the languages of the world, according to their outward divergence of form, into three great classes : the Monosyllabic, the Agglutinated, and the Inflected.

The Monosyllabic class comprises such languages as consist of separate, invariable monosyllables. These have no organization nor mutual affiliation, and they do not admit of scientific grammatical principles. The Chinese, with its kindred dialects, belongs to this family ; and the languages of the North American Indians have generally the same character.

In the Agglutinated languages, also called Turanian, from Turan, a name of Central Asia, the words indeed combine, but in a mechanical manner, and without losing their identity or original form. The principal varieties are the Tartar, Finnish, Lappish, Hungarian, and Caucāasian

The Inflected languages are completely systematic, with a full and living organization. They are scientific in their grammatical rules, and although more complicated in structure than the preceding classes, are better fitted for the uses of an advanced civilization. They are divided into two great families : the Semitic, and the Indo-European.

Among the Semitic languages we count Hebrew, Aramæan, Egyptian or Coptic, Chaldean, Phœnician, and Arabic. The last named is the only living language of any importance belonging to this family.

The Indo-European is generally divided into the *Āryan*, with its two principal branches, the Indian and *Irānīan*, and the *Græco-Italic* or *Pelasgic*. This latter comprises the Greek, with its dialects, and the Italic, which, in its turn, includes Etruscan, Latin, and the modern languages derived from the Latin. Among the remaining Indo-European families are the *Slāvic*, *Lettic*, *Gothic*, and *Celtic*, with their dialects.

I.

S A N S K R I T .

I.

SANSKRIT.

OF the Aryan languages the Sanskrit is considered as among the most ancient, having been introduced into the northwestern portion of the Indian peninsula at least as early as the fifteenth century before our era. The word Sanskrit means perfected ; the grammatical system of the language is vast and logical, and was reduced to a definite form at a very early date. The more ancient works on this subject have been lost, but Pânini, a writer of the third or fourth century B.C., has left a voluminous treatise, with four thousand grammatical rules, which have been commented upon and explained until this branch of literature has assumed vast proportions.

The leading characteristic of the Sanskrit, next to the abundance of forms and the facility of framing new derivatives and compounds, consists, without doubt, in the remarkable preservation of original materials and processes. So regular and clear are its formative methods, that in most words we can distinguish root, prefix, and termination, recognizing the original form and signification of each. While the etymology is thus elaborate, the syntax is of such inferior interest as to be frequently omitted in Sanskrit grammars. The charm of this language lies, not in the construction of sentences or periods, but in its boundless store of epithets. The formation and connection of clauses is extremely simple, but the number of cumbrous compound words is a serious defect in every species of composition.

The Sanskrit resembles Greek in its inflections ; it is richer in declension, but poorer in conjugation. Sanskrit nouns have three genders, three numbers, and eight cases. In conjugation we find three persons, six moods, and six tenses. Sanskrit is written from left to right ; its alphabet consists of fifty letters and two accessory signs. The construction of Sanskrit metre is based, as in Greek, entirely on quantity, no regard being had to accent. The more ancient poems are written in very simple metre, generally iambic, but the later versification is elaborate and artificial.

It is probable that the Sanskrit ceased to be a spoken language about the third or fourth century before our era. A variety of Indian dialects, classed under the general term Prakrit, are derived from this classic language. Among these we may mention the Hindui, spoken by the pure Hindoo population of the peninsula, also the Hindustani, the dialect used by the Mohammedan Hindoos. The former is written in the Sanskrit character, the latter in the Arabic. The ancient Sanskrit, thus superseded by mixed dialects, continues to be employed, not only for the sacred writings, but as the literary language of the Hindoos, their poetry and dramatic works being still preserved in this learned idiom.

SANSKRIT OR HINDOO LITERATURE.

The Hindoos and Egyptians, both claiming an ancient and characteristic civilization, differ remarkably in this. In Egypt, we find pyramids, statues and inscriptions, historical relics ; we know much of what the Egyptian has done, little of what he has thought. In India, the case is reversed ; of authentic

history there is little. We know nothing certainly of the achievements of this remarkable people ; but of their search after truth, their thoughts and speculations, we have the fullest record. Egypt is the country of monuments—India, the land of books.

The most ancient of the sacred books of the Hindoos are known as Vedās. They were written, probably, in the first centuries after the Aryan invasion of the peninsula, or, as Max Müller conjectures, a little later, between 1200 and 1000 B.C. The Aryan invaders of India were a pastoral and agricultural people ; a race of sages rather than of conquerors. A considerable period elapsed before the increase of population, or the desire of more extended dominion led them to penetrate the rich and fertile country lying between the Indus and the Ganges. Then followed wars with the aboriginal races, and these naturally gave birth to epic poetry. A third and later period embraces the golden age of Sanskrit literature, when the peninsula was ruled by enlightened princes, and poetry, art, and science attained their highest development. It is not easy to fix the chronology of any period with certainty ; the one last mentioned lies probably between 400 B.C. and 1000 A.D.

The Vedas contain the primitive teachings of Brahma, and were collected by the sage Vyāsa, under three heads : the Rig-Veda, the Yajur-Veda, and the Sama-Veda ; there is also a fourth, compiled at a more recent date. The Vedas consist of hymns, mystic prayers, invocations, imprecations, and religious rites. They have been largely commented, and the Vedic literature may afford abundant occupation to the most studious Brahmin.

Among other ancient writings we may mention the

Puranas, which correspond in some manner to the Theogony of Hesiod, containing as they do, traditions concerning cosmology and the genealogy of gods and heroes. Also, the Upapuranas, commentaries on the latter, and the Ordinances of Manu.

Although Polytheism is distinctly taught in the Vedas, there is latent in the system a vague idea of the unity of God, and the earlier Vedic teaching contained probably more of primitive truth than was transmitted to later times. It has been thought that the fabled Orpheus, to whom the Greeks attributed such sublime conceptions of the Deity, was, in reality, a sage of Eastern, probably of Hindoo origin. In one of the sacred poems, Krishna instructs a certain prince as to the necessity of subduing his lower appetites and passions. In his reply to the objections of his disciple we have the following sentence :

“It is possible ; for though the organs are great, the mind is greater ; the resolution is greater than the mind, and there is One greater than that.”

Brahma is, however, identified with nature, all that exists being an emanation of his substance. According to Hindoo teaching, the soul, purified by numberless transmigrations, is at length absorbed in the divinity as a drop of water is lost in the ocean. Krishna thus assures his disciple : “A man, trusting in the Supreme, goeth not astray ; at the hour of death he shall mix with the incorporeal nature of Brahma.” The Hindoo thus renounces for himself the personal existence which he denies to the Deity. This much desired union with Brahma was only possible to Hindoos of the higher caste. These might, by profound contemplation and an ascetic life, pass without further transmigration to be absorbed in the divine

essence. A Hindoo of lower rank might only hope, after the most austere and virtuous life, to be born, after many transmigrations, in a purer caste.

HYMN TO THE SUN.

From the Rig-Veda.

“Risen in majestic blaze,
 Lo ! the universe's eye,
 Vast and wondrous host of rays
 Shineth brightly in the sky.
 Soul of all that moveth not,
 Soul of all that moves below,
 Lighteth he Earth's gloomiest spot,
 And the heavens are all aglow !

“See ! he followeth the dawn,
 Brilliant in her path above ;
 As a youth by beauty drawn
 Seeks the maiden of his love !
 Hear us, O ye Gods ! this day,
 Hear us graciously, we pray !
 As the Sun his state begins,
 Free us from all heinous sins.

God of the Sun “Mitra, Várun Aditi !
 Hear, O hear us, graciously ;
 Powers of ocean, earth, and air,
 Listen, listen to our prayer.”

—GRIFFITHS. 111

The philosophical systems of the Hindoos, generally classed under six heads, are founded more or less upon the Vedas, but embrace a wide range of varied and conflicting doctrine. Portions of these writings have been praised as worthy of comparison with the best works of the Greek philosophers ; in others again we find the syllogism, dilemma, etc., handled with an ingenuity worthy of the sophists of any age or country.

The scientific literature of the Hindoos is not extensive. Of their grammatical works we have already spoken. Whatever accurate knowledge they have

concerning the heavenly bodies is of comparatively modern date, and was borrowed principally from the Greeks. In arithmetic and algebra their original progress was truly remarkable; the decimal system of notation which Europe received from the Arabs is of Hindoo origin, and our arithmetical figures are derived from the Sanskrit alphabet. In medicine and surgery the Hindoos possess works which are supposed to be of considerable value. With regard to the fine arts, however, or the more practical applications of science, there is little to attract the attention of the student.

We will now pass to the most interesting department of Indian literature. The principal epic poems of the Hindoos are the *Mahâbhârata* and the *Râmâyana*. The subject of the former is the feud between two royal races—the Pandavas and the Kauravas. It contains one hundred thousand double verses, and the date is variously stated from the year 1000 B.C. to the tenth century of our era. The *Bhagavad-Gita* is a remarkable episode, of which the following is the subject. Arjoon, a hero about to engage in battle, finds his soul oppressed by the mystery of life, its suffering and conflict, and believes that, whether he goes forward or declines the combat, he must equally sin. Krishna encourages the hero; and, in the dialogue which follows, we have, as it were, the essence of the highest Brahminical teaching. Krishna, seeing the reluctance of Arjoon to contend with his kinsmen who are in the hostile camp, thus speaks:

“And be thou sure the mighty boundless soul,
The Eternal Essence that pervades the whole,
Can never perish, never waste away :
'Tis indestructible nor knows decay.

Up then, and conquer ! In thy might arise !
 Fear not to slay *It*, for *It* never dies !
 As men throw off their garments worn and old,
 And newer raiment round their bodies fold,
 The ethereal spirit leaves its mortal shell
 And finds another form wherein to dwell.
 Essence of Life ! It lives, undimmed its ray,
 Though fiercest fire or keen dart seek to slay.
 Viewless, immutable, unshaken, still
It rests secure, yet wanders where *It* will.
 Incomprehensible, *It* knows not change,
 Boundless in being, boundless in its range,
 This is the nature of the Soul, great chief.
 It lives forever—therefore spare thy grief :
 All that is born must die, that dies be born again.”

In the Bhagavad-Gita there is much of deep philosophic thought ; and this is not mingled, as in the Vedas, with grossness and puerile superstition.

The Râmâyana describes, in twenty-four thousand double verses, the trials and exploits of Rama, a deified monarch, or rather an incarnation of Vishnu. He is the hero of some of the finest of the Hindoo poems and dramas. In all of these, nymphs, gods and demons play a distinguished part. The following lines are from an address of Sita, the bride of the hero, who wishes to share his forest exile :

“ If thou, indeed,
 Depart this day into the forest drear,
 I will precede, and smooth the thorny way.
 O hero brave, as water we reject
 In which our nutriment has been prepared,
 So anger spurn, and every thought unkind,
 Unworthy of thy spouse, and by thy side,
 Unblamed and unforbidden, let her stay.
 O chide me not ; for where the husband is—
 Within the palace, on the stately car,
 Or wandering in the air, in every state—
The shadow of his foot is her abode.
 My mother and my father having left,

I have no dwelling-place distinct from thee.
 Forbid me not. For in the wilderness,
 Hard of access, renounced by men and filled
 With animals and birds of every kind,
 And savage tigers, I will surely dwell.
 This horrid wilderness shall be to me
 Sweet as my father's house, and all the noise
 Of the three worlds shall never interrupt
 My duty to my lord. A gay recluse,
 On thee attending, happy shall I feel
 Within this honey-scented grove to roam,
 For thou e'en here canst nourish and protect ;
 And therefore other friend I cannot need.
 To-day most surely with thee I will go,
 And thus resolved, I must not be denied.
 Roots and wild fruit shall be my constant food ;
 Nor will I, near thee, add unto thy cares,
 Nor lag behind, nor forest food refuse ;
 But fearless traverse every hill and dale,
 Viewing the winding stream, the craggy rock,
 And, stagnant at its base, the pool or lake.
 In nature's deepest mysteries thou art skilled,
 O hero—and I long with thee to view
 Those sheets of water, filled with lotus blooms,
 Covered with ducks, and swans, and sylvan fowl,
 And studded with each wild and beauteous flower."

The Pancha-Tantra is the only work on morals composed by the Hindoo sages. Among its most commendable maxims are the following :

"Why may not those riches, which are neither bestowed in alms nor enjoyed, be considered as mine as well as thine?"

"That strength by which an enemy cannot be overcome ; that knowledge of religion which does not produce religious actions ; and those riches which are never enjoyed—are totally worthless."

"There are two excellent things in the world : the friendship of the good, and the beauties of poetry."

"The elephant, the lion, and the wise man seek their safety in flight ; but the crow, the deer, and the coward die in their nest."

"As long as a person remains silent, he is honored ; but

as soon as he opens his mouth, men sit in judgment upon his capacity."

"Every one, looking downwards, becomes impressed with the idea of his own greatness ; looking upwards, he feels his own littleness."

Women and kings form the subject of many of these sentences, and are sometimes classed together in a manner equally unflattering to both.

"Let none confide in the sea, nor in whatever has claws or horns, or carries deadly weapons ; neither in a woman nor in a king."

"Kings, women, and climbing plants love those who are near them."

"He is mistaken who thinks the king is ever his friend."

"Women neither love nor hate ; all their search is after new friends."

The following is curious :

"Very great sins, and very great acts of virtue, are certain to be punished or rewarded, either within three years, or three months, or three lunar quarters, or in three days."

The lyric poetry of the Hindoos is remarkable for descriptions of natural scenery. Its beauties are, however, marred by softness and effeminacy of sentiment. The Gita-Govinda, a pastoral, in which Krishna appears as a shepherd, has been much admired.

The Hitopadesa is a collection of fables, in which Vishnu-Sarma is supposed to instruct certain young princes committed to his care. It has been translated into almost every known language.

THE HINDOO THEATRE.

The drama is supposed to have reached its highest development in the third or fourth century before our era. The Hindoos say that it was invented by Brahma, who drew the material from the Vedas. The first dramas were exhibited in presence of the gods

by the Gandharbās and Āśparasas, spirits and nymphs of Indra's heaven. There is a pretty allusion to this fable in the play of "The Hero and the Nymph."

Urvāsi, a nymph of the air, is, with a band of sister spirits, winging her flight from the crest of Himalaya, when she is seized by a powerful and malignant demon. Her companions shriek for aid; the hero appears in his chariot, pursues the demon, and she is rescued. Urvāsi is preoccupied with the thought of her adventure and of the hero by whom she has been delivered, so that when she is called upon to perform in the heavenly drama, she has forgotten her part. For this offence she is exiled from heaven, and is condemned by Indra to lead the life of a mortal until certain conditions be fulfilled. In this little episode we have a fine description of the pursuit of the demon through the air. For this and the succeeding extracts we have used Prof. Wilson's translations.

"HERO (*to his charioteer*).—Bend our course
To yonder point, and urge the rapid steeds
To swiftest flight. 'Tis done; before the car
Like volleyed dust the scattering clouds divide;
The whirling wind deceives the dazzled eye,
And double round the axle seems to circle.
The wavering chowrie on the steed's broad brow
Points backward, motionless as in a picture;
And backward streams the banner from the breeze.
We meet—immovable."

The drama from which we take the above lines possesses much interest, and the passage in which the hero seeks for his vanished bride is of singular beauty. All nature, animate and inanimate, is invoked to aid him in his search. Palm-tree, lotus-blossom, flowing water, pea-fowl, elephant—each apostrophized in turn—replies with a characteristic choral song. Urvāsi, her-

self, is a lovely creation, which will bear comparison with the Ariel and Undine of European literature.

The language of these ancient dramas, and even of those written at a later date, is Sanskrit. It must be observed, however, that while gods, kings, and Brahmins speak the sacred idiom, the minor characters, including always the women, speak Prákrit. Sir William Jones observes, in his preface to the *Sakuntalá*: "Prákrit is little more than the language of the Brahmins melted down by a delicate articulation to the softness of the Italian." This criticism will only apply to the Prákrit which is spoken by the heroine and the chief female characters. The dialect used by the common people and slaves is far less refined. A knowledge of the learned idiom was considered entirely out of place in the gentler sex. A character in one of the dramas exclaims: "Two things make me laugh—a woman reading Sanskrit, and a man singing a song." The use of what was actually a dead language prevented the drama from becoming at any time a popular entertainment among the Hindoos. Even the educated, who understood the Sanskrit, could not receive the same pleasure as if the actors spoke in the familiar vernacular.

These dramas were represented only on great occasions; the festivals of the gods, the birth of a prince, etc. The subjects are generally, but not always, mythological. Tragedy is unknown, and every piece concludes in such a manner as to leave an agreeable impression. In the Indian drama we observe the same incongruity which marks their mythology. While the shedding of blood, even in combat, is strictly banished from the stage, scenes are represented far more revolting—as where in "*Málatí and Mádhava*,"

the hero appears in the temple of Chámundá, bearing in his hand a lump of human flesh, an offering to the terrific goddess.

The range of characters is wide—including often in the same play, gods, demons, heroes, Brahmin sages, slaves, executioners, dancers and mountebanks. The heroine has always, of necessity, her companion and confidant; devotees and priestesses are also represented, not always in favorable colors. In one drama a priestess appears decorated with a necklace of human skulls; she yields, however, in horror to the goddess whom she serves, and who wears, instead of a jewel, a human corpse pendant from each ear. This fearful apparition is only described.

The Vidúshaka, or buffoon, singularly enough, is always a Brahmin. He is the humble companion of a prince or man of rank, and in style of wit generally resembles Sancho Panza. When he expresses himself as follows, we seem to hear a speech from a Spanish comedy :

“SERVANT.—I wish every one to take notice that the harder it rains, the more thoroughly do I get ducked; and the colder the wind that blows down my back, the more do my limbs shiver. A pretty situation for a man of my talents; for one who can play the flute with seven holes, the *viná* with seven strings, can sing like a jackass, and who acknowledges no musical superior except perhaps Tamburú* or Nárada.”†

The number of acts varies in the Hindoo drama from four to ten, the time allotted for each being from one and a half to four hours. It is unnecessary to say that a single piece forms the entertainment of an entire day. Each play begins and ends with a bene-

* One of the choristers of heaven.

† The son of Brahma, inventor of the Indian lute.

diction and a prologue, which consists of a dialogue between two of the actors. In this some account is given of the play about to be performed, also an eulogium of the author.

A further peculiarity remains to be noted. In the Hindoo drama the unities were entirely disregarded; but there was no scenery, nor could the stage be transformed in any way to denote the transfer of the action from town to country—from the palace of the king to the depths of the tropical forest. All is left to the imagination of the audience, who must follow the description which the actor gives of his surroundings. A housebreaker, entering, says: "This wall is of baked bricks; they must be picked out," upon which he sets to work upon the imaginary obstacle. Having made a breach, he looks in. "How! a lamp alight! The golden rays streaming through the opening in the wall show in the exterior darkness like the yellow streak of the pure metal on the touch-stone. Now, to enter," etc., etc.

In the same manner, an actor describes the palace he is about to enter.

"MESSENGER.—A very pretty entrance, indeed. The threshold is very neatly colored, well-swept, and watered; the floor is beautified with strings of sweet flowers; the top of the gate is lofty and gives one the pleasure of looking up to the clouds, whilst the jasmine festoon hangs tremblingly down, as if it were now tossing on the trunk of Indra's elephant. Over the door-way is a lofty arch of ivory; above it, again, wave flags dyed with safflower, their fringes curling in the wind, like fingers that beckon me: "Come hither." On either side, the capitals of the door-posts support elegant crystal flower-pots, in which young mango-trees are springing up. The door-panels are of gold, stuck, like the stout breast of a demon, with studs of adamant.

"SERVANT.—This leads to the first court. Enter, sir; enter.

"MESS.—Bless me! why here is a line of palaces, as white

as the moon, as the conch, as the stalk of the lotus—the stucco has been laid on here by handfuls ; golden steps, embellished with various stones, lead to the upper apartments, whence the crystal windows, festooned with pearls, and bright as the eyes of a moon-faced maid, look down upon Ujjayin. The porter dozes on an easy-chair, as stately as a Brahmin deep in the Vedas.”

In the general plot and conduct of these dramas there is much that is revolting not only to our ideas of Christian morality, but to all our habits of thought and feeling. These compositions are curious, as examples of a literature which owes nothing to the classic writers from which our own has been derived, also as illustrations of an ancient and peculiar civilization which stands alone in the history of the world.

We find in the Hindoo drama occasional instances of high and noble thought, sometimes strangely colored by the peculiar doctrines of their mythology. In the *Mrichchhakati*, or “Toy Cart,” a prince would incite one of his followers to the commission of a murder. The latter objects ; and the prince exclaims :

“Come, come ; what have you to fear ?

VITÁ.—All nature ; the surrounding realms of space ;

The genii of these groves, the moon, the sun,

The winds, the vault of heaven, the firm-set earth,

Hell's awful ruler, and the conscious soul—

These all bear witness to the good or ill

That men perform, and these will see the deed.”

Failing to move him, the prince commands a young slave to perform the cruel deed, offering a rich recompense. A spirited scene ensues, the young man refusing firmly to obey. To the indignant question of the prince :

“Villain, am I not your master ? ”

the slave replies :

“You are, sir ; my body is yours, but not my innocence ; I dare not obey you.”

The enraged prince has recourse to violence, but the young man answers :

“Beat me if you will ; kill me if you will—I cannot do what ought not to be done. Fate has already punished me with servitude for the misdeeds of a former life, and I will not incur the penalty of being born again a slave.”

In conclusion, we would give a few extracts :

THE SETTING OF THE CRESCENT MOON.

“From his high palace bowed,
And hastening to his setting, scanty gleams
The waning moon, amidst the gathering gloom ;
In slender crescent, like the tusk's fine point,
That peers above the darkening wave, where bathes
The forest elephant.”

The following is from the “Toy Cart.” The heroine and her attendant wander belated ; the storm rises, and in their conversation we have a description clothed in peculiar imagery :

“ATTENDANT.—Lady, upon the mountain's brow the clouds

Hang dark and drooping, as the aching heart
Of her who sorrows for her absent lord ;
Their thunders rouse the pea-fowl, and the sky
Is agitated by their wings, as fanned
By thousand fans with costly gems incased.
Behold, where yonder ponderous cloud assumes
The stature of the elephant, the storks
Entwine a fillet for his front, and waves
The lightning like a pennon o'er his head.

“LADY.—Observe, my friend, the day is swallowed up
By these deep shades, dark as the dripping leaf
Of the tamāla-tree, and like an elephant
That cowering shuns the battle's arrowy sleet,
So shrinks the scattering ant-hill from the shower.
The fickle lightning darts such brilliant rays,
As gleam from golden lamps in temples hung.

Whilst, like the consort of an humble lord,
The timid moonlight peeps amid the clouds.

"ATT.—There, like a string of elephants, the clouds
In regular file, by lightning filets bound,
Move slowly at their potent god's command.
The heavens let down a silver chain to earth.
The earth, that shines with buds and sheds sweet odors,
Is pierced with showers, like diamond-shafted darts
Launched from the rolling mass of deepest blue
Which heaves before the breeze and foams with flame ;
Like ocean's dark waves by the tempest driven,
And tossing high their flashing surge to shore.

"LADY.—Hailed by the pea-fowl with their shrillest cries,
By the pleased storks delightedly caressed,
And by the provident swans with anxious eye
Regarded, yonder rests one threatening cloud
Involving all the atmosphere in gloom.

"ATT.—The countenance of heaven is close concealed
By shades the lightning scant irradiates.
The day and night confusedly intermix,
And all the lotus eyes of either close.
The world is lulled to slumber by the sound
Of falling waters, sheltered by the clouds
That countless crowd the chambers of the sky.

"LADY.—The stars are all extinct, as fades the memory
Of kindness in a bad man's heart. The heavens
Are shorn of all their radiance, as the wife
Her glory loses in her husband's absence.
In sooth, I think the firmament dissolves :
Melted by Indra's scorching bolt it falls
In unexhausted torrents. Now the cloud
Ascends—now stoops—now roars aloud in thunder—
Now sheds its streams—now frowns with deeper gloom,
Full of fantastic change, like one new raised
By fortune's fickle favors."

A SULTRY NOON.*

"'Tis past mid-day. Exhausted by the heat,
The peacock plunges in the scanty pool
That feeds the tall tree's root ; the drowsy bee
Sleeps in the hollow chamber of the lotus

* From the "Hero and the Nymph."

Darkened with closing petals ; on the brink
Of the now tepid lake the wild duck lurks
Amongst the sedgy shade ; and even here
The parrot from his wiry bower complains
And calls for water to allay his thirst."

A FOREST SCENE.*

"The sun, with glow intense,
Shoots through the sky, and drives to shade
The silent songsters of the glade.
Alone, amid the loftiest boughs,
The dove repeats her tender vows ;
Or wild fowl cry, as pleased they mark
Their insect prey amid the bark.
By tangling branches overhead
A cooling gloom beneath is spread,
Where rests the elephant, reclining
Against the ancient trunk ; or, twining
His tusk around the branchy bower,
He scatters round a leafy shower
Of flowery buds, that falling seem
An offering to the sacred stream
Whose crystal waters placid flow
Along the verdant shore below."

PROWESS OF A HERO.†

"I feel abashed when I observe his prowess.
Unmoved he stands, though round him madly rages
The storm of battle—through the murky air,
With clouds of dust obscured, the whirling sword
Flashes like lightning—rattle the rushing cars,
With jangling bells harsh pealing ; onward roll
Like thunder-clouds the ponderous elephants,
Dark laden with the tempest of the war.
He shouts defiance ; and his clanging bow
Is heard above the rattling drums, more loud
And more reiterated than the din
Which mountain bowers reverberate to the roar
Of the wild elephant. The hero heaps
The earth with trunkless, tossing heads, as offerings
To satisfy the hungry king of death."

* From "Uttara-Rîma-Charitra."

† Ibid.

The drama from which we have taken the above concludes with the following benediction spoken by Ráma :

“May that inspired strain, whose lines impart
This tale, delight and purify the heart ;
As with a mother’s love, each grief allay,
And wash like Gangá’s waves, our sins away.
And may dramatic skill and taste profound
Portray the story and the verse expound,
So that due honor ever shall belong
To the great master of poetic song,
Alike familiar with a loftier theme,
The sacred knowledge of the ONE SUPREME.’”

II.

GREEK LITERATURE.

GREEK LANGUAGE.

AMONG the Pelasgic idioms, the ancient Greek attained the highest development, being distinguished by the richness of its vocabulary and the elegance and strength of its combinations and phrases. It excels equally in harmony, being musical even in prose. With regard to the supposed derivation of Greek from Sanskrit, Max Müller remarks :

“No sound scholar would ever think of deriving any Greek or Latin word from Sanskrit. Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin are sisters, varieties of one and the same type. They all point to some earlier stage, when they were less different from each other than they now are, but no more.”

The Greek counted four principal dialects, the differences being mainly of form, and with but little divergence in stems and roots.

The Æolic, the most ancient of these dialects, was spoken north of the Isthmus, in certain colonies of Asia Minor, and in the northern islands of the Ægean Sea. It was used by Alcæus and Sappho, and is found, mingled with other forms, in Homer, Pindar, Theocritus, and other writers. Some authors consider that the Æolic does not possess a sufficiently fixed character to be considered as a distinct dialect.

The Doric, which was characterized by its strength, was the language of Pindar, Theocritus, Archimedes, and generally of the Pythagorean philosophers. It was spoken in the Peloponnesus and in the Doric colonies of Asia Minor, Lower Italy, and Sicily.

The Ionic, distinguished by its softness and harmony, was spoken in the Ionian colonies of Asia

Minor and the islands of the Archipelago. It was used by Homer and Hesiod, by Anacreon in his odes, also by Herodotus and some other prose writers.

The Attic dialect, which is little more than the Ionic enriched and refined, prevailed during the golden age of Greek literature. It was the language of *Æschylus*, *Sophocles*, *Euripides*, and *Aristophanes*; of the historians *Thucydides* and *Xenophon*; as also of *Plato*, *Demosthenes*, and others among the writers and orators of Greece.

During the first centuries of our era Greek was in some sort a universal language, and was everywhere used by educated persons. During the latter period of the Eastern empire it was still spoken with tolerable purity at the court of Constantinople and among the learned; a mixed idiom had, however, taken its place among the masses of the people. With the fall of Constantinople, 1453, the ancient Greek ceased to be a living language, and the popular dialect, now known as modern Greek or Romaic, departed still further from the forms of the classic tongue.

EARLY LITERATURE OF GREECE.

It is impossible to suppose that the Greek language could have attained within a brief period the richness and full development which we find in the Homeric verse. Centuries must have elapsed, during the course of which the primitive idiom became fitted to embody in regular and harmonious numbers the lofty conceptions of the poet.

If we admit this progress in the language, we must also conclude that the art of poetry itself did not suddenly attain its full perfection; that long before the time of Homer the Greeks had listened with delight to

the strains of earlier and ruder bards. Some of these poems were sung at rural festivals, such as were the times of harvest and vintage. Homer alludes to the lay of *Līnus*, which was sung at the grape gathering. *Līnus* was a beautiful shepherd youth torn by savage dogs, and his fate, like that of *Adōnis*, was yearly lamented by young men and maidens. The song *Bormus* had also a plaintive character, and commemorated the story of a boy who, while drawing water for the reapers, was seized and borne away by nymphs of the stream.

In these primitive lays it is probable that an allegorical meaning was intended; and that in the untimely fate of blooming youths, the poet lamented the tender beauty of spring wasted by the summer heat.

Besides these rustic songs there were *Pæans* addressed to *Apollo* and other gods; *Hýmēnæos*, or marriage hymns, and *Threnos*, or lamentations for the dead, all contributing to the religious pomp, the joy, or the solemnity of every sacred or festive gathering. Apart from these more popular compositions were religious and heroic poems by bards such as *Mársyas*, *Orphéus*, and *Musæus*, names which belong rather to the mythology than the literature of Greece. Of these graver works we have perhaps some portion in the verses generally known as *Orphic Remains*, but even these, as we shall have occasion to remark, are of doubtful authenticity.

With such exceptions, we may say that the names of the earlier bards, with the lays they sang, have alike passed into oblivion, leaving the great father of epic poetry to stand with his perfected work first in time as in genius among the classic writers of the world.

HOMER.

(PROBABLE EPOCH) TENTH CENTURY B.C.

For the life of this poet, the time and place of his birth, and the manner in which his poems were transmitted, we have little more than popular traditions, with conjectures, more or less probable, derived from his writings.

According to the opinion most generally received, Homer was born in Smyrna, and belonged to one of the Ionian families which had removed from Ephesus to that city at a time when its population consisted chiefly of Ætolians and Achæians. The poet's mother was named Crithëis; with regard to his father, we have many contradictory accounts.

Homer is said to have taught a school at Smyrna, and to have already acquired some reputation as a poet, when he was induced by one Mentès, a merchant and sea captain, to accompany him upon his voyages. During these he acquired the geographical knowledge which he displays in his works; but they seem to indicate also that he had never visited any country west of the Ionian Sea. Wherever he went, Homer recited his verses, which were received with enthusiasm, except in Smyrna, where he is said to have experienced the fate of a prophet in his own country.

During a visit which he made in Íthaca, the poet contracted a disease in his eyes, which is said to have terminated in total blindness; hence, according to some the name of Homer, instead of that of Mélesi-genēs, or Mæónides, which he had formerly borne.

Homér^os signifies also a witness or voucher; and many critics are unwilling to admit the supposition that the living, ever-varying pictures presented to us by this great poet could have been painted by one shut out from the world of light.

According to an old tradition, Thes^tórⁱdes, a school-master of Phoc^ea, obtained from Homer a copy of his poems, and sailing to Chⁱos, recited them publicly as his own compositions. Homer followed and exposed the impostor, who was obliged to leave the island in disgrace. The poet resided a long time at Chios, in the enjoyment of wealth and fame. The manner of his death is uncertain; according to Herodotus, he died at Ios, on his way to Athens, and was buried on the sea-shore.

With regard to the exact period at which Homer lived, nothing can be ascertained with any degree of certainty. We may suppose, however, that he flourished in the tenth century before our era. That he composed his verses at least a century later than the fall of Troy seems also probable. When warlike achievements were transmitted by oral tradition and the recitation of bards, such an interval would detract nothing from the interest felt by the Asiatic Greeks in the exploits of their countrymen. The lapse of time was, on the other hand, sufficient to give both personages and events a historical and legendary character, and to allow the poet the necessary freedom in the use of fictitious embellishments.

The fame of Homer rests upon his two great poems, the Iliad and the Odyssey. It would be out of place in the present work to give more than a passing notice to the controversies which have arisen in modern times regarding this poet and his writings.

Some critics consider the story of the expedition against Troy, and the capture of that city by the Greeks, as purely mythical, both as to the great event and its details. To this we would only say, that a popular tradition generally received concerning an event of national importance can hardly be accounted for otherwise than by supposing it to have a foundation in fact. No poet, whether ancient or modern, has ventured upon a historical fiction, of which the subject was altogether imaginary, both as to personages and events. The rude and unlettered Greeks of that early period would have felt but little enthusiasm for the Homeric poems had they not believed that the heroes of the *Iliad* had a real existence. It is probable that their exploits were already familiar from tradition, and the recitation of ruder bards, when the great poet collected the scattered legends, and wove them into that wondrous epic which stands alone among the productions of human genius.

There are also writers who doubt the existence of Homer himself, and believe the *Iliad* to have been compiled from unconnected fragments of ancient minstrelsy, having the Trojan war for their common subject. This theory is rejected by the best critics. The sustained excellence of the different portions of the poem, the unity of plan, and the harmony which is observed throughout, particularly in the action of the leading characters, prove, in their opinion, that the entire *Iliad* was the production of the same mind. Reasoning also from internal evidence, they consider the *Odyssey* as the undoubted sequel to the greater poem, showing less fire and brilliancy, but bearing, nevertheless, the true Homeric stamp. No doubt was ever entertained upon the authenticity of these

poems by the ancient Greeks, who were certainly in a better position to form a correct judgment.

It was customary for the Greek rhapsodists to recite at festivals some chosen passage of the Homeric poems, more stress being sometimes laid on the art of the reciter than on the beauty of the verses. It was probably in this manner that the books of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were dispersed, and existed at one time only in unconnected fragments. Solon took the first step towards restoring them, by compelling the rhapsodists to follow one another according to the order of the poem. A little later, Pisistratus, with the aid of several Greek poets, collected the scattered portions of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and restored the whole to their original state. Proclamation was made throughout Greece, offering a liberal reward for any written fragments of these poems. So anxious was Pisistratus to obtain a correct version that he paid again and again for copies of the same passages made by different persons. By comparing these, he was enabled to decide upon the proper readings, and to reject the additions made by inferior bards.

THE ILIAD.

The subject of this poem is, as the opening verses declare, the wrath of Achilles, and the calamities which followed his quarrel with Agamemnon.

“Achilles’ wrath, to Greece the direful spring
Of woes unnumbered, heavenly goddess sing !
That wrath which hurled to Pluto’s gloomy reign
The souls of mighty chiefs untimely slain ;
Whose limbs unburied on the naked shore,
Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore ;
Since great Achilles and Atrides strove,
Such was the sovereign doom, and such the will of Jove ! ”

Achilles, wronged and insulted by Agamemnon, retires from the war, in which he refuses to take any further part. The king is depicted as haughty and impious ; and the sympathies of the reader are enlisted on the side of the Thessalian prince.

In the third book, Helen, the unhappy cause of the war, appears for the first time. Paris, meeting Menelaüs in the field, flies conscience stricken before the injured king, "and shuns the fate he well deserved to find."

"As godlike Hector sees the prince retreat,
He thus upbraids him with a generous heat :
Unhappy Paris ! but to women brave !
So fairly-formed, and only to deceive !
Oh ! hadst thou died when first thou saw'st the light,
Or died at least before thy nuptial rite !
A better fate than vainly thus to boast,
And fly, the scandal of thy Trojan host.
Gods ! how the scornful Greeks exult to see
Their fears of danger undeceived in thee !
'Thy figure promised with a martial air,
But ill thy soul supplies a form so fair."

Roused by these taunts, Paris challenges Menelaüs to decide the fortune of the war by single combat. Iris is sent by Juno to summon Helen to the ramparts that she may view the fight. In the passage which follows, the art of the poet has been much admired. We are shown the affectionate weakness of the aged king, who has exposed his country to ruin by shielding his guilty son, and who now, won by the gentle grace of Helen, treats her as his child, and excuses her crime as compelled by an overruling power.

"She spoke, and sweet desire moved Helen's mind,
Deep-touched by all her folly had resigned ;
The lord, whom once her virgin arms caressed,
The roof that reared her, and the hearth that blest.

She rose, her snowy veil around her spread
 And tears of tenderness beneath it shed ;
 Then onward passed, and sought the Scæan gate
 Where sate the elders of the Trojan state ;
 Chiefs, who no more in bloody fights engage,
 But wise through time, and narrative with age,
 Like grasshoppers that in the woods rejoice,
 Or send from summer bowers their slender voice.
 These, when the Spartan queen approached the tower,
 In secret owned resistless beauty's power ;
 They cried : No wonder such celestial charms
 For nine long years have set the world in arms ;
 What winning graces ! what majestic mien !
 She moves a goddess, and she looks a queen !
 Yet hence, oh, heaven ! convey that fatal face,
 And from destruction save the Trojan race."

Priam receives Helen with affectionate greeting, places her beside him, and questions her concerning the Grecian leaders. The queen recognizes each in turn, but marks at length the absence of her brothers from the field.

"The rest I know, and could in order name ;
 All valiant chiefs, and men of mighty fame.
 Yet two are wanting of the numerous train
 Whom long my eyes have sought, and sought in vain.
 Castor and Pollux, first in martial force,
 One bold on foot, and one renowned on horse.
 My brothers these ; the same our native shore ;
 One house contained us, as one mother bore.
 Perhaps the chiefs, from warlike toils at ease,
 From distant Troy refused to sail the seas ;
 Perhaps their swords some nobler quarrel draws,
 Ashamed to combat in their sister's cause.

So spoke the fair, nor knew her brothers' doom,
 Wrapped in the cold embraces of the tomb.
 Adorned with honors on their native shore,
 Silent they slept, and heard of wars no more."

—POPE AND SOTHEBY.

The combat between Paris and the Spartan king is interrupted by Venus, who comes to the rescue of

the Trojan prince. The truce is violated, and the war continues, Hector performing prodigies of valor.

In the sixth book we find the episode of Hector's last visit to his father's palace. He refuses to taste the wine which the aged queen brings for his refreshment, or to offer with blood-stained hands a libation to the gods. He rejects also the entreaties of Helen that he would give himself a short respite from the toils of war. The Spartan queen, contrasting Hector's virtue with the conduct of the unworthy Paris, feels all the bitterness of remorse.

“When Helen thus with lowly grace began :

Oh, generous brother ! if the guilty dame
That caused these woes, deserve a sister's name !
Would heaven, ere all these dreadful deeds were done,
The day that showed me to the golden sun,
Had seen my death ! Why did not whirlwinds bear
The fatal infant to the fowls of air ?
Why sunk I not beneath the whelming tide,
And midst the roarings of the waters died ?
Heaven filled up all my ills, and I accurst
Bore all, and Paris of those ills the worst.
Helen at least a braver spouse might claim,
Warmed with some virtue, some regard of fame !
The gods have linked our miserable doom,
Our present woe, and infamy to come ;
Wide shall it spread, and last through ages long,
Example sad, and theme of future song.”

Hector proceeds to seek Andromache, and the parting scene with her and with his infant son is among the most beautiful and the most frequently quoted passages of the Iliad.

PARTING OF HECTOR AND ANDROMACHE.

“Hector now passed, with sad presaging heart,
To seek his spouse, his soul's far dearer part ;
At home he sought her, but he sought in vain :
She, with one maid of all her menial-train,

Had thence retired ; and with her second joy,
 The young Astyanax, the hope of Troy :
 Pensive she stood on Ilion's towery height,
 Beheld the war, and sickened at the sight ;
 There her sad eyes in vain her lord explore,
 Or weep the wounds her bleeding country bore.

Hector this heard, return'd without delay ;
 Swift through the town he trod his former way,
 Through streets of palaces and walks of state,
 And met the mourner at the Scæan gate.
 With haste to meet him sprung the joyful fair,
 His blameless wife, Aëtion's wealthy heir.
 The nurse stood near, in whose embraces pressed,
 His only hope hung smiling at her breast ;
 Whom each soft charm and early grace adorn,
 Fair as the new-born star that gilds the morn.
 Silent the warrior smiled, and pleased resigned
 To tender passions all his mighty mind :
 His beauteous princess cast a mournful look,
 Hung on his hand, and then dejected spoke ;
 Her bosom labored with a boding sigh,
 And the big tear stood trembling in her eye.

' Too daring prince ! ah, whither dost thou run ?

Ah, too forgetful of thy wife and son !

And think'st thou not how wretched we shall be,

A widow I, a helpless orphan he !

For sure such courage length of life denies,

And thou must fall, thy virtue's sacrifice.

Greece in her single heroes strove in vain ;

New hosts oppose thee, and thou must be slain !

Oh grant me, gods ! ere Hector meets his doom,

All I can ask of heaven, an early tomb.

So shall my days in one sad tenor run,

And end with sorrows as they first begun.

No parent now remains my griefs to share,

No father's aid, no mother's tender care.

The fierce Achilles wrapp'd our walls in fire,

Laid Thebæ waste, and slew my warlike sire !

By the same arm my seven brave brothers fell ;

In one sad day beheld the gates of hell.

My mother lived to bear the victor's bands,

The queen of Hippoplacia's sylvan lands.

Yet, while my Hector still survives, I see

My father, mother, brethren, all in thee :

Alas ! my parents, brothers, kindred, all
(Once more will perish, if my Hector fall.
Thy wife, thy infant, in thy danger share :
Oh, prove a husband's and a father's care !
That quarter most the skilful Greeks annoy,
Where yon wild fig-trees join the walls of Troy ;
Thou from this tower defend the important post ;
There Agamemnon points his dreadful host,
That pass Tydides, Ajax, strive to gain,
And there the vengeful Spartan fires his train.
Thrice our bold foes the fierce attack have given,
Or led by hopes, or dictated from heaven.
Let others in the field their arms employ,
But stay my Hector here, and guard his Troy.'

The chief replied : ' That post shall be my care,
Nor that alone, but all the works of war.
How would the sons of Troy, in arms renown'd,
And Troy's proud dames, whose garments sweep the ground,
Attain the lustre of my former name,
Should Hector basely quit the field of fame ?
My early youth was bred to martial pains,
My soul impels me to the embattled plains :
Let me be foremost to defend the throne,
And guard my father's glories and my own.
Yet come it will, the day decreed by fates ;
(How my heart trembles while my tongue relates !)
'The day when thou, imperial Troy ! must bend,
Must see thy warriors fall, thy glories end.
And yet no dire presage so wounds my mind,
My mother's death, the ruin of my kind,
Not Priam's hoary hairs defiled with gore,
Not all my brothers gasping on the shore,
As thine, Andromache ! thy griefs I dread ;
I see thee trembling, weeping, captive led
In Argive looms our battles to design,
And woes, of which so large a part was thine !
'To bear the victor's hard commands, or bring
The weight of waters from Hyperia's spring.
There, while you groan beneath the load of life,
They cry, " Behold the mighty Hector's wife !"
Some haughty Greek, who lives thy tears to see,
Embitters all thy woes by naming me.
The thoughts of glory past, and present shame,
A thousand griefs shall waken at the name !

May I lie cold before that dreadful day,
 Press'd with a load of monumental clay !
 Thy Hector, wrapt in everlasting sleep,
 Shall neither hear thee sigh, nor see thee weep.'
 Thus having spoke, the illustrious chief of Troy
 Stretch'd his fond arms to clasp the lovely boy.
 The babe clung crying to his nurse's breast,
 Scared at the dazzling helm and nodding crest.
 With secret pleasure each fond parent smiled,
 And Hector hasted to relieve his child,
 The glittering terrors from his brows unbound,
 And placed the beaming helmet on the ground.
 Then kiss'd the child, and, lifting high in air,
 Thus to the gods preferr'd a father's prayer :—

He spoke, and fondly gazing on her charms,
 Restored the pleasing burden to her arms ;
 Soft on her fragrant breast the babe he laid,
 Hush'd to repose, and with a smile survey'd.
 The troubled pleasure soon chastised by fear,
 She mingled with the smile a tender tear.
 The soften'd chief with kind compassion view'd,
 And dried the falling drops, and thus pursued :—

'Andromache, my soul's far better part,
 Why with untimely sorrows heaves thy heart ?
 No hostile hand can antedate my doom,
 Till fate condemns me to the silent tomb.
 Fix'd is the term to all the race of earth ;
 And such the hard condition of our birth,
 No force can then resist, no flight can save ;
 (All sink alike, the fearful and the brave.)
 No more—but hasten to thy tasks at home,
 There guide the spindle, and direct the loom :
 Me glory summons to the martial scene,
 The field of combat is the sphere for men ;
 Where heroes war, the foremost place I claim,
 The first in danger, as the first in fame.'

Thus having said, the glorious chief resumes
 His towery helmet black with shading plumes.
 His princess parts, with a prophetic sigh,
 Unwilling parts, and oft reverts her eye,
 That stream'd at every look ; then, moving slow,
 Sought her own palace, and indulged her woe.

There, while her tears deplored the godlike man,
Through all her train the soft infection ran,
The pious maids their mingled sorrows shed,
And mourn the living Hector as the dead."

—POPE, *Iliad*, vi.

It would seem that in Achilles, Homer drew the ideal hero of a rude and barbarous age. He is brave, sincere, faithful in friendship, and reverent to the gods; but he is also represented as fierce, cruel, incapable of pity, and wreaking his vengeance even on the lifeless remains of a valiant enemy. In Hector, on the contrary, we see the soul of the poet nobler than his age, endowing a character with those knightly virtues which his contemporaries could hardly have appreciated.

In the ninth book, we have an embassy sent to Achilles by Agamemnon and the Greek leaders; they offer rich presents, and pray that he would come to the aid of his countrymen. Their arrival at the tent of the hero is thus described :

"Through the still night they march, and hear the roar
Of murmuring billows on the sounding shore.
To Neptune, ruler of the seas profound,
Whose liquid arms the mighty globe surround,
They pour forth vows, their embassy to bless,
And calm the rage of stern Æacides.
And now, arrived, where, on the sandy bay
The Myrmidonian tents and vessels lay ;
Amused at ease, the god-like man they found,
Pleased with the solemn harp's harmonious sound,
(The well-wrought harp from conquer'd Thebæ came,
Of polish'd silver was its costly frame :)
With this he soothes his angry soul, and sings
Th' immortal deeds of heroes and of kings.
Patroclus only of the royal train,
Plac'd in his tent, attends the lofty strain ;
Full opposite he sat, and listen'd long,
In silence waiting till he ceas'd the song.

Unseen the Grecian embassy proceeds
To his high tent ; the great Ulysses leads.
Achilles starting, as the chiefs he spied,
Leap'd from his seat, and laid the harp aside."

The hero repulses with scorn every attempt at reconciliation, and declares his intention to return to Greece with his followers. The war continues with varied success, and Achilles at length yields to the entreaties of his friend Patroclus, and lends him his armor that he may combat against the Trojans in his stead. The young hero is slain by Hector, and it is only after a fierce struggle that his body is rescued by the Greeks and conveyed to the tent of Achilles.

In the eighteenth book, the poet relieves the scene of war and carnage by a beautiful episode. Achilles burns to avenge the death of his friend, but his armor has become the spoil of Hector ; Thetis, the goddess-mother of the hero, seeks the aid of Vulcan.

" Meanwhile the silver-footed dame
Reach'd the Vulcanian dome, eternal frame !
High-eminent amid the work divine,
Where Heav'n's far-beaming brazen mansions shine.
There the lame architect the goddess found,
Obscure in smoke, his forges flaming round."

The goddess prefers her petition to Vulcan, who proceeds to forge the celestial armor for Achilles. The following passages are taken from the description of the shield :

" Next, ripe in yellow gold, a vineyard shines,
Bent with the ponderous harvest of its vines ;
A deeper dye the dangling clusters show,
And, curled on silver props, in order glow :
A darker metal mixt, intrenched the place ;
And pales of glittering tin th' enclosure grace.
In this, one pathway gently winding leads,
Where march a train with baskets on their heads,

(Fair maids and blooming youths) that smiling bear
 The purple product of th' autumnal year.
 To these a youth awakes the warbling strings
 Whose tender lay the fate of Linus sings ;
 In measured dance behind him move the train,
 Tunè soft the voice, and answer to the strain.

Next this, the eye the art of Vulcan leads
 Deep through fair forests, and a length of meads ;
 And stalls, and folds, and scatter'd cots between ;
 And fleecy flocks that whiten all the scene.

A figured dance succeeds : such once was seen
 In lofty Gnosus ; for the Cretan queen,
 Form'd by Dædalean art : a comely band
 Of youths and maidens, bounding hand in hand.
 The maids in soft cymars of linen drest ;
 The youths all graceful in the glossy vest ;
 Of those the locks with flowery wreaths inroll'd ;
 Of these the sides adorn'd with swords of gold,
 That glittering gay, from silver belts depend.
 Now all at once they rise, at once descend
 With well taught feet ; now shape, in oblique ways
 Confus'dly regular, the moving maze :
 Now forth at once, too swift for sight they spring,
 And undistinguished blend the flying ring :
 So whirls a wheel, in giddy circle tost,
 And rapid as it runs, the single spokes are lost.
 Thus the broad shield complete, the artist crowned
 With his last hand, and pour'd the ocean round :
 In living silver seem'd the waves to roll,
 And beat the buckler's verge, and bound the whole."

From the nineteenth book to the close of the poem
 Achilles occupies the first place, rivalling by his
 exploits the deities who contend on either side.

Chief among the Trojan heroes we see Hector; and
 Æneas, the goddess-born son of Anchises. The inter-
 vention of the gods is thus described :

"But when the powers descending swelled the fight,
 Then tumult rose ; fierce rage and pale affright
 Varied each face ; then Discord sounds alarms,
 Earth echoes, and the nations rush to arms.

Now through the trembling shores Minerva calls,
 And now she thunders from the Grecian walls.
 Mars, hovering o'er his Troy, his terror shrouds
 In gloomy tempests and a night of clouds :
 Now through each Trojan heart he fury pours
 With voice divine from Ilion's topmost tow'rs ;
 Now shouts to Simois from her beauteous hill :
 The mountain shook, the rapid stream stood still,
 Above, the Sire of Gods his thunder rolls,
 And peals on peals redoubled rend the poles.
 Beneath, stern Neptune shakes the solid ground ;
 The forests wave, the mountains nod around ;
 Through all her summits tremble Ida's woods
 And from their sources boil her hundred floods.
 Troy's turrets totter on the rocking plain,
 And the tossed navies beat the heaving main.
 Deep in the dismal regions of the dead,
 Th' infernal monarch rears his horrid head,
 Leaped from his throne, lest Neptune's arms should lay
 His dark dominions open to the day,
 And pour in light on Pluto's drear abodes,
 Abhorred by men and dreadful e'en to gods.
 Such war th' immortals wage ; such horrors rend
 The world's vast concave, when the gods contend."

The spirit of Hector is shown in the following lines
 taken from an address to his followers :

"Behold, ye warriors, and exert your powers.
 Death is the worst ; a fate which all must try ;
 And, for our country, 'tis a bliss to die.
 The gallant man, though slain in fight he be,
 Yet leaves his nation safe, his children free ;
 Entails a debt on all the grateful state ;
 His own brave friends shall glory in his fate ;
 His wife live honored, all his race succeed ;
 And late posterity enjoy the deed !"

Jove himself, witnessing the valor of the Trojan
 prince, compassionates his inevitable doom.

"Him, proud in triumph, glittering from afar,
 The god whose thunder rends the troubled air,
 Beheld with pity, as apart he sate,
 And conscious, looked through all the scene of fate.

He shook the sacred honors of his head ;
Olympus trembled, and the godhead said :
‘ Ah ! wretched man ! unmindful of thy end !
A moment’s glory ! and what fates attend ?
In heavenly panoply divinely bright
Thou stand’st, and armies tremble at thy sight.
Yet live ! I give thee one illustrious day,
A blaze of glory ere thou fad’st away.
For ah ! no more Andromache shall come,
With joyful tears to welcome Hector home ;
No more officious, with endearing charms,
From thy tired limbs unbrace Pelides’ arms !’
Then with his sable brow he gave the nod
That seals his word, the sanction of a god.
The stubborn arms by Jove’s command disposed,
Conformed spontaneous, and around him closed ;
Filled with the god, enlarged his members grew,
Through all his veins a sudden vigor flew,
The blood in brisker tides began to roll,
And Mars himself came rushing on his soul.”

Hector at length meets Achilles in single combat, and is slain. Before engaging in fight he proposes a mutual oath by which the victor should be bound to grant funeral honors to his fallen enemy. Achilles refuses to make such an engagement, and replies also with brutal ferocity to Hector’s dying prayer that his body might be restored to his aged parents. The savage temper of the Grecian hero is further shown in the indignities offered to the lifeless remains of his enemy, which the poet acknowledges to be “unworthy of himself and of the dead.”

After the funeral of Patroclus has been celebrated with extraordinary pomp and the sacrifice of Trojan captives, Achilles is visited in his tent by the aged Priam. The unhappy king has brought a wain laden with treasures as a ransom for the body of his beloved Hector. This enterprise is sanctioned by the gods, and Thetis has already visited her son, to softer

the fierceness of his heart, and dispose him to grant the petition of Priam. The remains of the hero, so cruelly outraged, are restored to the unhappy father, and Achilles grants a truce of twelve days for the funeral rites. Great mourning is made in Troy, and the whole city is plunged in grief. The *Iliad* concludes with an account of the funeral rites.

The following passages in blank verse are, perhaps, more faithful to the spirit of the original Greek than Pope's translation, which is fettered by the use of rhyme :

LAMENT FOR HECTOR.

“ As he spake,

The throng gave way and let the chariot pass ;
 And having brought it to the royal halls,
 On a fair couch they laid the corse, and placed
 Singers beside it, leaders of the dirge,
 Who sang a sorrowful lamenting strain,
 And all the women answered it with sobs.
 White-armed Andromache in both her hands
 Took warlike Hector's head, and over it
 Began the lamentation midst them all :—

‘ Thou hast died young, my husband, leaving me
 In this thy home a widow, and one son
 An infant yet. To an unhappy pair
 He owes his birth, and never will, I fear,
 Bloom into youth ; for ere that day will Troy
 Be overthrown, since thou, its chief defence,
 Art dead, the guardian of its walls and all
 Its noble matrons and its speechless babes,
 Yet to be carried captive far away,
 And I among them, in the hollow barks ;
 And thou, my son, wilt either go with me,
 Where thou shalt toil at menial tasks for some
 Pitiless master ; or perhaps some Greek
 Will seize thy little arm, and in his rage
 Will hurl thee from a tower and dash thee dead,
 Remembering how thy father, Hector, slew
 His brother, son, or father ; for thy hand,
 O Hector ! forced full many a Greek to bite

The dust of earth. Not slow to smite was he
In the fierce conflict ; therefore all who dwell
Within the city sorrow for his fall.'

So spake the weeping wife ; the women all
Mingled their wail with hers, and Hecuba
Took up the passionate lamentation next :—

' O Hector ! thou who wert most fondly loved
Of all my sons ! While yet thou wert alive,
Dear wert thou to the gods, who even now,
When death has overtaken thee, bestow
Such care upon thee. All my other sons
Whom swift Achilles took in war, he sold
At Samos, Imbrus, by the barren sea,
And Lemnos harborless. But as for thee,

When he had taken with his cruel spear
Thy life, he dragged thee round and round the tomb
Of his young friend, Patroclus, whom thy hand
Had slain, yet raised he not by this the dead ;
And now thou liest in the palace here,
Fresh and besprinkled as with early dew,
Like one just slain with silent arrows aimed
By Phœbus, bearer of the silver bow.'

Weeping she spake, and woke in all who heard
Grief without measure. Helen, last of all,
Took up the lamentation, and began :—

' O Hector ! thou wert dearest to my heart
Of all my husband's brothers,—for the wife
Am I of godlike Paris, him whose fleet
Brought me to Troy,—would I had sooner died !
And now the twentieth year is passed since first
I came a stranger from my native shore,
Yet have I never heard from thee a word
Of anger or reproach. And when the sons
Of Priam, and his daughters, and the wives
Of Priam's sons, in all their fair array,
Taunted me grievously, or Hecuba
Herself,—for Priam ever was to me
A gracious father,—thou didst take my part
With kindly admonitions, and restrain
Their tongues with soft address and gentle words.
Therefore my heart is grieved, and I bewail
Thee and myself, at once,—unhappy me !
For now I have no friend in all wide Troy,—

None to be kind to me ; they hate me all.
 Weeping she spake : the mighty throng again
 Answered with wailing." —BRYANT.

We give the following passage from the Earl of Derby's translation of the *Iliad*. It is taken from Book XXIII.

VISION OF ACHILLES.

"The rage of thirst and hunger satisfied,
 Each to their several tents to rest repaired ;
 But on the many dashing ocean's shore
 Pelides lay, amid his myrmidons,
 With bitter groans ; in a clear space he lay
 Where broke the waves continuous on the beach ;
 There circumfused around him, gentle sleep
 Lulling the sorrows of his heart to rest,
 O'ercame his senses ; for the hot pursuit
 Of Hector round the breezy heights of Troy,
 His active limbs had wearied. As he slept,
 Sudden appeared Patroclus' mournful shade ;
 His very self, his height and beauteous eyes,
 And voice, the very garb he wont to wear ;
 Above his head it stood, and thus it spoke :
 'Sleepest thou, Achilles, mindless of thy friend,
 Neglecting not the living, but the dead !
 Hasten my funeral rites, that I may pass
 Through Hades' gloomy gates ; ere those be done
 The spirits and spectres of departed men
 Drive me far from them ; nor allow to cross
 Th' abhorred river, but forlorn and sad
 I wander through the wide-spread realms of night ;
 And give me now thy hand, whereon to weep,
 For never more when laid upon the pyre
 Shall I return from Hades ; never more
 Apart from all our comrades shall we two,
 As friends, sweet counsel take ; for me, stern Death,
 The common lot of man, has oped his mouth.
 Thou too, Achilles, rival of the gods,
 Art destined, here beneath the walls of Troy,
 To meet thy doom. Yet one thing must I add,
 And make, if thou wilt grant it, one request :
 Let not my bones be laid apart from thine,

Achilles, but together ; as our youth
 Was spent together in thy father's house :
 So in one urn be now our bones inclosed,
 The golden vase, thy goddess-mother's gift.
 Whom answered thus Achilles, swift of foot :

‘Why art thou here, loved being? Why on me
 These several charges? Whatso'er thou biddest
 Will I perform, and all thy mind fulfil ;
 But draw thou near, and in one short embrace
 Let us, while yet we may, our grief indulge.’

Thus, as he spoke he spread his longing arms,
 But nought he clasped, and with a wailing cry,
 Vanished like smoke the spirit beneath the earth.
 Up sprang Achilles, all amazed and mute ;
 His hands together, and lamenting cried :

‘O Heaven! there are, then, in the realms below,
 Spirits and spectres, unsubstantial all ;
 For through the night Patroclus' shade hath stood
 Weeping and wailing at my side, and told
 His bidding.’ ”

THE ODYSSEY.

The subject of this poem is the wanderings of Ulysses and the various adventures which befel him, both by land and sea, before he is permitted to reach Ithaca. The story is marked by an extraordinary variety of fable and incident. The scene changes according as the poet describes the sorrows of Penelope, and the dangers to which she is exposed from the insolence of her suitors ; or, again, relates the wanderings of Telemachus in search of his father. The adventures of Ulysses are, for the most part, related by himself, at the request of the hospitable King of Phæacia. The poem closes with the return of Ulysses to Ithaca, the punishment of the suitors, and the happy reunion of the hero with the faithful Penelope. The versification of the *Odyssey* is the same as that of the *Iliad*. The following, from Ma-

ginn's Homeric Ballads, is a correct translation of the passage, although rendered in the peculiar style of the English ballad :

THE INTRODUCTION OF PENELOPE.

I.

"Soon as Athené spoke the word,
She took the likeness of a bird,
And, skyward soaring, fled.
The counsels of the heavenly guest
Within Telemachus's breast
New strength and spirit bred.

II.

"His absent father to his thought
Was by his wakened memory brought
More freshly than of old :
But when Athené's flight he saw,
A feeling deep of reverend awe
His inmost heart controlled.

III.

"He knew the stranger was a god ;
And, hastening to his own abode,
He joined the suitor train.
A far-famed minstrel in the hall
Sang to the peers, who listened all
In silence to his strain.

IV.

"As subject of his lays he chose
The mournful story of the woes
Borne by the Achaian host,
When, under Pallas' vengeful wrath,
Homeward returning was their path
Bent from the Trojan coast.

V.

"The song Icarius' daughter heard,
And all thine inmost soul was stirred,
Penelope the chaste !
Straight did she from her bower repair,
And, passing down the lofty stair,
The festal hall she graced.

VI.

“ Alone she went not—in her train
She took with her handmaidens twain ;
And when the peerless queen
Came where the suitors sate, aloof
Close by a post that propped the roof,
She stood with face unseen.

VII.

“ A veil concealed her cheeks from view,
And by each side a handmaid true
In seemly order stood ;
With tears fast bursting from her eyne,
Addressing thus the bard divine,
She her discourse pursued :—

VIII.

“ ‘ Phemius ! for men’s delight thy tongue
Can many another flowing song
In soothing measure frame ;
Can tell of many a deed, which, done
By God or man in days bygone,
Bards have consigned to fame.

IX.

“ ‘ Take one of those, and all around,
Silent, will hear the dulcet sound,
Drinking the blood-red wine ;
But cease that melancholy lay,
That wears my very heart away—
A heavy woe is mine !

X.

“ ‘ How can I check the tide of grief,
Remembering still that far-famed chief
Whose fame all Hellas fills !’
Answered her son : ‘ O, mother mine !
Why dost thou blame the bard divine
For singing as he wills ?

XI.

“ ‘ Blame not the poet ; blame Heaven,
Which to poor struggling men has given
What weight of wo it chose.

How can we charge the bard with wrong,
If the sad burden of his song
Turns on the Danaän woes ?

XII.

“ ‘ Men ever, with delighted ear,
The newest song desire to hear ;
Then firmly to the strain .
Listen, which tells of perils done :
My sire is not the only one
Who of the chiefs to Ilion gone,
Has not returned again.

XIII.

“ ‘ For many, to that fatal shore
Who sailed away, came back no more ;
Thy business is at home,
Thy servant-maidens to command,
And ply, with an industrious hand,
The distaff and the loom.

XIV.

“ ‘ To men the guiding power must be ;
At all times in these halls to me,
For here my will is law.’
The queen went homeward, as he bade,
And felt the words her son had said
Inspired her soul with awe.

XV.

“ ‘ Soon did she, with her handmaids twain,
Her lofty seated chamber gain ;
And there, with many a tear,
Until Athené came to steep
Her weary lids in balmy sleep,
Did chaste Penelope bewEEP
Her absent husband dear.
While, seated still at festival,
The suitors, in the dusky hall,
Revell’d with noisy cheer.”

HESIOD.

NINTH CENTURY B.C.

This poet flourished in the ninth century before Christ; but we have no means of ascertaining the date of his birth with any degree of certainty. He was a native of Ascra, in Bœotia, where his father possessed considerable property. Hesiod, being defrauded by a younger brother, named Perses, of his share of the inheritance, left Ascra in disgust, and retired to Orchómenus, on Lake Cōpāis.

The poet had been in his youth a shepherd on Mt. Helicon; and it would seem that he was engaged, during the greater part of his life, in rural pursuits. His "Works and Days" treats exclusively of husbandry and the regulation of a rural household.

The only personal incident which can be gathered from the writings of Hesiod is, that he appeared at a poetical contest held at Chalcis during the funeral games celebrated in honor of Amphidēmas. Here he received as a prize a tripod, which he consecrated to the Muses on Mt. Helicon.

The death of this poet is said to have been connected with the misconception of an oracle. The Pythia, at Delphi, warned him that he would meet his death in a place consecrated to Nēmean Jove. Being on a journey, he avoided, for this reason, the town of Argos, and directed his course to CEnoë, not being aware that this place was held sacred to the same divinity. Here the poet was murdered. His body, which had been cast into the sea, was recovered, and the murderers were detected by the sagacity of

his dog. According to a more mythical account, a company of dolphins brought the body of Hesiod to the shore at the moment that the people were celebrating the festival of Neptune.

The works which remain to us under the name of this poet are: "Works and Days," the "Theogony, or Birth of the Gods," and the "Shield of Hercules." The first of these contains many interesting episodes, but has little poetic imagery. The Theogony furnishes the most ancient account of the Greek divinities and heroes; it is, in many parts, dry and tedious, being little more than a catalogue of gods and goddesses. These defects are compensated by passages which will always rank among the truly sublime. Milton, in his description of the combat of the rebel angels, has borrowed from Hesiod's "Battle of the Gods and Giants," without, however, excelling the ancient poet.

We give some brief extracts :

BATTLE OF THE GIANTS.

. "They thus opposed

In dismal conflict 'gainst the Titans stood,
 In all their sinewy hands, wielding aloft
 Precipitous rocks. On th' other side, alert
 The Titan phalanx closed; then hands of strength
 Joined prowess, and showed forth the works of war.
 The immeasurable sea tremendous dashed
 With roaring, earth resounded, the broad heaven
 Groaned shattering; huge Olympus reeled throughout,
 Down to its rooted base, beneath the rush
 Of those immortals. The dark chasm of hell
 Was shaken with the trembling, with the tramp
 Of hollow footsteps and strong battle-strokes,
 And measureless uproar of wild pursuit.
 So they against each other through the air
 Hurl'd intermixed their weapons, scattering groans
 Where'er they fell. The voice of armies rose
 With rallying shout through the starred firmament,

And with a mighty war-cry, both the hosts
 Encountering closed. Nor longer then did Jove
 Curb down his force, but sudden in his soul
 There grew dilated strength, and it was filled
 With his omnipotence ; his whole of might
 Broke from him, and the godhead rushed abroad.
 The vaulted sky, the Mount Olympus, flashed
 With his continual presence, for he passed
 Incessant forth, and lightened where he trod.

.

But to see
 With human eye, and hear with ear of man,
 Had been as on a time the heaven and earth
 Met hurtling in mid-air, as nether earth
 Crashed from the centre, and the wreck of heaven
 Fell ruining from high. Not less, when gods
 Grappled with gods, the shout and clang of arms
 Commingled, and the tumult roared from heaven.
 The whirlwinds were abroad, and hollow roused
 A shaking and a gathering dark of dust,
 Crushing the thunders from the clouds of air,
 Hot thunderbolts and flames, the fiery darts
 Of Jove ; and in the midst of either host
 They bore upon their blast the cry confused
 Of battle, and the shouting."

—ELTON.

RETRIBUTIONS OF PROVIDENCE ON THE UNJUST.

"Rough are the ways of Justice as the sea,
 Dragged to and fro by men's corrupt decree,
 Bribe—pampered men ! whose hands perverting draw
 The right aside and warp the wrested law,
 Though while corruption on their sentence waits,
 They thrust pale Justice from their haughty gates.
 Invisible their steps the Virgin treads
 And musters evil o'er their sinful heads.
 She with the dark of air her form arrays,
 And walks in awful grief the city ways ;
 Her wail is heard, her tear upbraiding falls
 O'er their stained manners, their devoted walls.
 Ponder, oh judges ! in your inmost thought,
 The retribution by his vengeance wrought.

Invisible, the gods are ever nigh,
 Pass through the midst, and bend th' all-seeing eye :
 The men who grind the poor, who wrest the right,
 Aweless of Heaven's revenge, are naked to their sight.
 For thrice ten thousand holy demons rove
 This breathing world, the delegates of Jove.
 Guardians of man, their glance alike surveys
 The upright judgments and th' unrighteous ways.
 A virgin pure is Justice, and her birth
 August from him who rules the heavens and earth :
 A creature glorious to the gods on high,
 Whose mansion is yon everlasting sky.
 Driven by spiteful wrong, she takes her seat,
 In lowly grief, at Jove's eternal feet.
 There of the soul unjust her plaints ascend ;
 So rue the nations when their kings offend ;
 When, uttering wiles, and brooding thoughts of ill,
 They bend the laws and wrest them to their will.
 O, gorged with gold, ye kingly judges, hear !
 Make straight your paths ; your crooked judgments fear ;
 That the foul record may no more be seen,
 Erased, forgotten, as it ne'er had been ! "

—*Ibid.*

WINTER.

" Beware, the January month, beware
 Those hurtful days, that keenly-piercing air
 Which flays the herds ; when icicles are cast
 O'er frozen earth, and sheathe the nipping blast.
 From courser-breeding Thrace comes rushing forth
 O'er the broad sea the whirlwind of the north,
 And moves it with his breath : the ocean floods
 Heave, and earth bellows through her wild of woods.
 Full many an oak of lofty leaf he fells,
 And strews with thick-branch'd pines the mountain dells :
 He stoops to earth ; the crash is heard around ;
 The depth of forest rolls the roar of sound.
 The beasts their cowering tails with trembling fold,
 And shrink and shudder at the gusty cold ;
 Thick is the hairy coat, the shaggy skin,
 But that all-chilling breath shall pierce within.
 Not his rough hide can then the ox avail ;
 The long-hair'd goat, defenceless, feels the gale :

Yet vain the north-wind's rushing strength to wound
 The flock with sheltering fleeces fenced around.
 He bows the old man crook'd beneath the storm ;
 But spares the softs-kinn'd virgin's tender form.
 Screened by her mother's roof on wintry nights,
 And strange to golden Venus' mystic rites,
 The suppling waters of the bath she swims,
 With shiny ointment sleeks her dainty limbs ;
 Within her chamber laid on downy bed,
 While winter howls in tempest o'er her head.

Now gnaws the boneless polypus his feet,
 Starved 'midst bleak rocks, his desolate retreat ;
 For now no more the sun with gleaming ray
 Through seas transparent lights him to his prey.
 And now the horned and unhorned kind,
 Whose lair is in the wood, sore-famished, grind
 Their sounding jaws, and, chilled and quaking, fly
 Where oaks the mountain dells imbranch on high :
 They seek to couch in thickets of the glen,
 Or lurk, deep sheltered, in some rocky den.
 Like aged men, who, propp'd on crutches, tread
 Tottering, with broken strength and stooping head,
 So move the beasts of earth, and, creeping low,
 Shun the white flakes and dread the drifting snow."

SUMMER ENJOYMENTS.

"When blooms the thistle, and from leafy spray
 The shrill Cicada pours her sounding lay,
 Her wings all quivering in the summer bright ;
 When goats are fat, when wine yields most delight,
 And heat hath parched the skin ; oh ! then be mine
 The rock's deep shadow and the Byblian wine,
 With milky cakes, and milk itself most sweet
 Of goats not giving suck, and dainty meat
 Of kids and heifers upon green leaves fed ;
 Then while we drink the wine so darkly red !
 There sitting in the shade, I'll eat my fill,
 Breathed on by zephyr, freshened by some rill,
 Whose ever-flowing waves shall brightly shine
 While in three parts of water glows my wine."

—*Quarterly Review.*

ARCHILOCHUS.

EIGHTH CENTURY B.C.

This poet, who flourished in the latter part of the eighth and the beginning of the seventh century before our era, was one of the earliest of the lyric poets, and (the first who wrote iambic verses according to fixed rules.)

Archilochus was a native of Paros; and while yet young, accompanied his father, when the latter led a colony from that island to Thasos. Of his life we know little, the accounts given by the ancients being in a great measure fabulous. It would seem that his career was one of continued misfortune, and this may perhaps account for the bitter and vindictive spirit which is said to have characterized his verses. Of these, but a few fragments remain, preserved in the writings of Athenæus, St. Clement of Alexandria, and others. In one of these the poet confesses, making light of the disgrace, that in a battle between the Thasians and the people of Thrace, he threw away his buckler, and saved himself by flight:

“The foeman glories o’er my shield—
 I left it on the battle-field:
 I threw it down beside the wood,
 Unscathed by scars, unstained with blood.
 And let him glory: since from death
 Escaped, I keep my forfeit breath,
 I soon may find at little cost
 As good a shield as that I’ve lost.”

—MERIVALE.

The countrymen of Archilochus viewed the incident more seriously; and we are told that, having afterwards visited Sparta, he was ordered by the magis-

trates to leave the city. It is believed that Archilochus returned to Paros, and was killed in a battle with the inhabitants of Naxos. According to some writers, this poet had been betrothed to Neobúle, the daughter of Lycámbes. The latter, finding a richer suitor for his daughter's hand, or, as others say, disgusted with the poet's cowardice, refused to fulfil his engagement. Archilochus revenged himself by writing such bitter invectives against Neobúle and her father, that they hanged themselves in despair.

This story, however exaggerated, serves to prove the opinion popularly entertained of the vindictive character of Archilochus. His genius was nevertheless highly estimated ; and it was said that the Muses, jealous of the glory of Homer, inspired Archilochus with the idea of composing in iambic verse.

An ancient epigram on the tomb of the poet concludes with these lines :

“ Pass softly, stranger, lest it be your doom
To wake the wasps that settle on his tomb.”

EQUANIMITY.

“ Tossed on a sea of trouble, soul, my soul,
Thyself do thou control ;
And to the weapons of advancing foes
A stubborn breast oppose ;
Undaunted 'mid the hostile might
Of squadrons burning for the fight.”

“ Thine be no boasting, when the victor's crown
Wins thee deserved renown ;
Thine no dejected sorrow, when defeat
Would urge a base retreat :
Rejoice in joyous things—nor overmuch
Let grief thy bosom touch
'Midst evil, and still bear in mind,
How changeeful are the ways of humankind.”

—HART.

ALCÆUS.

SEVENTH CENTURY B.C. 600

A lyric poet who flourished towards the close of the seventh century. He was a native of Mityléne in Lesbos, and a contemporary of Sappho. He is the inventor of a poetical metre which bears his name, and which has been employed by Horace in many of his odes. Alcæus was famed for his resistance to tyranny, and his finest odes are those which extol the blessings of liberty and exhort men to combat in its defence. His verses were highly esteemed, but we have remaining only a few fragments.

THE SPOILS OF WAR.

“Glitters with brass my mansion wide ;
 The roof is decked on every side,
 In martial pride,
 With helmets ranged in order bright,
 And plumes of horse-hair nodding white,
 A gallant sight—
 Fit ornament for warrior’s brow—
 And round the walls in goodly row
 Refulgent glow
 Stout greaves of brass, like burnished gold,
 And corselets there in many a fold
 Of linen rolled ;
 And shields that, in the battle fray,
 The routed losers of the day
 Have cast away.
 Eubœan falchions too are seen,
 With rich-embroidered belts between
 Of dazzling sheen :
 And gaudy surcoats piled around,
 The spoils of chiefs in war renowned,
 May there be found—
 These, and all else that here you see,
 Are fruits of glorious victory,
 Achieved by me.” —MERIVALE

TYRTÆUS.

ABOUT 684 B.C.

An elegiac and lyric poet who flourished in the early part of the seventh century B.C. According to the popular account, the Spartans, threatened by the Messenians, and torn by civil discord, consulted an oracle, and were directed to apply to the Athenians for a leader. The latter sent, in derision, Tyrtaeus, a lame schoolmaster of the city. This story is discredited by the best authorities; and it has been conjectured that the lameness of the poet was but a satirical allusion to his use of the elegiac measure, or alternate hexameter and pentameter, the latter being shorter by a foot.

It seems certain that Tyrtaeus came to the Lacedæmonians during the Messenian war, and that his wise counsel and stirring verse contributed not a little to unite the citizens among themselves, and to stimulate them to a bold defence against the common enemy. He wrote *Eunomia*, or political odes; *Elegies*, or exhortations to courage in battle; and *Embateria*, or marching songs. These last were in the spirited anapæstic measure, and were intended to be sung to the music of the flute.

When the Spartans were on campaign, it was their custom, after the evening meal and a pæan in honor of the gods, to recite in turn the elegies of Tyrtaeus. He who was judged to have recited with most spirit was rewarded by receiving a larger portion of meat than his comrades.

COURAGE AND PATRIOTISM.

- “ I would not value, nor transmit the fame
 Of him whose brightest worth in swiftness lies ;
 Nor would I chant his poor unwarlike name
 Who wins no chaplet but the wrestler's prize. ✓
- “ In vain, for me, the Cyclops' giant might
 Blends with the beauties of Tithōnus' form ;
 In vain the racer's agile powers unite,
 Fleet as the whirlwind of the Thracian storm.
- “ In vain, for me, the riches round him glow,
 A Midas or a Cinyras possess ;
 Sweet as Adraštus' tongue his accents flow,
 Or Pēlops' sceptre seems to stamp him blest.
- “ Vain all the dastard honors he may boast,
 If his soul thirst not for the martial field ;
 Meet not the fury of the rushing host,
 Nor bear o'er hills of slain the untrembling shield.
- “ This—this is virtue : this the noblest meed
 That can adorn our youth with fadeless rays ;
 While all the perils of the adventurous deed
 The new-strung vigor of the State repays.
- “ Amid the foremost of the embattled train,
 Lo, the young hero hails the glowing fight !
 And, though fall'n troops around him press the plain,
 Still fronts the foe, nor brooks inglorious flight.
- “ His life—his fervid soul opposed to death,
 He dares the terror of the field defy ;
 Kindles each spirit with his panting breath,
 And bids his comrade warriors nobly die !
- “ See, see ! dismayed, the phalanx of the foe
 Turns round, and hurries o'er the plain afar ;
 While doubling, as afresh, the deadly blow,
 He rules, intrepid chief, the waves of war !
- “ Now fall'n, the noblest of the van, he dies !
 His city by the beauteous death renowned ;
 His low-bent father marking, where he lies,
 The shield, the breastplate, hacked by many a wound.

- “The young, the old, alike commingling tears,
 His country's heavy grief bedews the grave !
 And all his race, in verdant lustre, wears
 Fame's richest wreath, transmitted by the brave.
- “Though mixed with earth the imperishable clay,
 His name shall live, while Glory loves to tell—
 ‘True to his country, how he won the day,
 How firm the hero stood, how calm he fell !’
- “But if he 'scape the doom of death (the doom—
 To long, long, dreary slumbers), he returns
 While trophies flash and victor-laurels bloom,
 And all the splendor of the triumph burns.
- ‘The old, the young, caress him, and adore ;
 And with the city's love through life repaid,
 He sees each comfort that endears in store,
 Till, the last hour, he sinks to Pluto's shade.
- “Old as he droops, the citizens, o'erawed
 (Ev'n veterans), to his mellow glories yield ;
 Nor would in thought dishonor or defraud
 The hoary soldier of the well-fought field.
- “Be yours to reach such eminence of fame ;
 To gain such heights of virtue nobly dare,
 My youths ! and, 'mid the fervor of acclaim,
 Press, press to glory ! nor remit the war !”

—POLWHELE.

ÆSOP.

*FLOURISHED TOWARDS THE CLOSE OF THE SEVENTH
 CENTURY B.C.*

Æsopus, the celebrated fabulist, is supposed to have been by birth a Phrygian ; he was of servile origin, and was owned successively by several masters. The last of these, Tadmon, a philosopher of Samos, was so much impressed by the talents of his slave that he gave him his freedom.

Æsop travelled much, occupying himself partly in the acquisition of knowledge, and partly in communicating instruction to others. His lessons were given

in the form of fables, and the excellence of these has caused his name to be universally associated with this species of composition. He visited Persia, Egypt, Asia Minor, and Greece. When the Athenians were restless under the government of Pisistratus, Æsop composed for their instruction the fable of the frogs petitioning Jupiter for a king. Cræsus, king of Lydia, invited the fabulist to his court ; but it would appear that his residence in Lydia was brief, and that he soon returned to Greece.

When Solon had offended Cræsus by the low esteem in which he held riches, Æsop, whose philosophy retained probably some taint of his former servile condition, remarked :

“A wise man should resolve either not to converse with kings at all, or to converse with them agreeably.”

To which the nobler-minded Athenian replied :

“Nay, he should either not converse with them at all, or converse with them usefully.”

The particulars of the death of Æsop are differently related. Plutarch tells us that he was sent by Cræsus to Delphi with a vast amount of gold, a portion of which was to be expended in a magnificent sacrifice to Apollo, the rest to be distributed among the inhabitants. Æsop offered the appointed sacrifices, but sent the remaining treasure to Sardis, declaring that he found the Delphians totally unworthy of the king's liberality. The people were deeply irritated, and the fabulist, accused of sacrilege, was condemned and thrown from the rock Hyampea. On the way to execution, Æsop is said to have recited, but without effect, a fable appropriate to his unhappy position. Plutarch further relates that

Apollo, offended at the deed, sent upon the Delphians a pestilence and other calamities, from which they were only delivered when a public reparation had been made.

It is not believed that any of the fables attributed to Æsop were reduced by him to a written form. They were probably preserved by oral tradition, and collected at a later period. Plato informs us that Socrates amused himself in prison by versifying some of these fables, and his example was followed by others. Of the elegiac verse composed by Æsop the following only has come down to us :

DEATH THE SOVEREIGN REMEDY.

“ Who, but for death, could find repose
From life, and life’s unnumbered woes ?
From ills that mock our art to cure,
As hard to fly as to endure ?
Whate’er is sweet without alloy,
And sheds a more exalted joy,
Yon glorious orb that gilds the day,
Or placid moon, thy silver ray,
Earth, sea, whate’er we gaze upon,
Is thine, O Nature, thine alone ;
But gifts, which to ourselves we owe,
What are they all, but fear and woe ?
Chance pleasure, hardly worth possessing,
Ten curses for a single blessing.”

—BLAND.

SAPPHO.

SEVENTH CENTURY B.C.

This celebrated poetess was born about the year 642 B.C. Of her life but little is known. She was married to a native of Lesbos, named Cerculus. She had one child, a daughter, and was left a widow while still in the bloom of youth. The immoralities

attributed to Sappho, the story of her affection for a youth named Phaon, and her despairing leap from the promontory of Leucæte, were fabrications of a later age, and are nowhere mentioned by her contemporaries. It is believed that the poetess was confounded with a notorious woman of the same name, a native of Eresus, in Lesbos.

It seems probable that the misfortunes of Sappho arose, not from disappointed affection, but from political events. She was persuaded by Alcæus to join a conspiracy against Pittacus, tyrant of Mitylene, and shared the exile of that poet and his partisans. Alcæus speaks of her with respect and admiration; calling her "Violet-crowned, pure, sweetly-smiling Sappho."

Of the poetical works which won for Sappho so high a reputation, we have but a few fragments, hardly sufficient to give any just idea of her merits; but we must accept the judgment of antiquity, that her verses were unrivalled in grace and sweetness. The Greeks bestowed upon her the title of Tenth Muse; and it is said that Solon, hearing his nephew recite one of her odes, exclaimed that he would not willingly die until he had learned it by heart. Longinus, in his essay on the sublime, quotes some of her verses.

Sappho formed a society of literary women, whom she instructed in the kindred arts of poetry and music. The following lines seem to have been addressed to some one of her own sex, who had spoken scornfully of the pursuits to which she was devoted:

"When dead, thou shalt in ashes lie,
Nor live in human memory;
Nor any page in time to come
Shall draw thee from thy shrouding tomb.

For thou didst never pluck the rose
 That on Pieria's mountain grows :
 Dim and unseen thy feet shall tread
 The shadowy mansions of the dead ;
 Thee, maiden ! shall no eye survey.
 Start from th' obscurer ghosts, and wing thy
 soaring way."

On the death of Sappho, public honors were rendered to her memory, and the Lesbians coined money impressed with her image.

The following couplet is ascribed to Plato :

"Some thoughtlessly proclaim the muses nine,
 A tenth is Lesbian Sappho, maid divine."

S. 11, 223, 1, 22

FRAGMENTS.

I.

"I have a child—a lovely one—
 In beauty like the golden sun,
 Or like sweet flowers of earliest bloom,
 And Cleïs is her name :—for whom
 I Lydia's treasures, were they mine,
 Would glad resign."

II.

"Cling to the brave and good, the base disown—
 Whose best of fortunes is to live unknown."

III.

"Through orchard plots, with fragrance crown'd,
 The clear, cold fountain murmuring flows :
 And forest leaves, with rustling sound
 Invite to soft repose."

IV.

"Wealth, without virtue, is a dangerous guest ;
 Who holds them mingled is supremely blest."

V.

"Beauty, fair flower, upon the surface lies ;
 But worth with beauty soon in aspect vies."

SOCIAL POSITION OF WOMAN IN GREECE.

When referring to the cloud which has rested on the reputation of Sappho, and of others equally gifted, we are led to consider the social position of woman a fatally weak point in Greek civilization.

The freedom which, if we take Homer as our authority, was enjoyed by the women of the heroic age, had been exchanged, at the period of which we write, for a state of seclusion, almost of servitude. The domestic affections, the light of that sanctuary we call home, can hardly be said to have existed among the Greeks. The wife was the guardian of her husband's goods, the minister of his daily wants, and to her care was committed the physical training of his children during their more tender years. Such was the sum of her duties and privileges ; such the sphere allotted to her even by men like Socrates and Xenophon. The latter, in his *Economicus*, a treatise on housekeeping, gives the ideal of a perfect wife. She must be taught that her first duty is to care for her husband's property ; on this point he enters into some details. The model wife is to renounce the use of paint and cosmetics, and is to keep up her good looks by taking sufficient *indoor exercise*, such as kneading dough, making beds, and going about to superintend the labors of the slaves. Not one word of a share in her husband's higher pursuits and pleasures, of anything like sympathy or companionship. The wife of the Roman peasant, as described by Virgil and Horace, would have sunk in much that constitutes the true dignity of woman by exchanging her lot for that of the Greek matron.

Intellectual acquirements, and even the lighter ac-

complishments, thus denied to the wives and daughters of Athenian citizens, were cultivated by women whose questionable position afforded them an entire freedom of action. They were often possessed of estimable qualities, by which they might have exercised a healthy influence on society had not their foreign extraction, according to the Athenian law of marriage, formed an absolute bar to their entering the ranks of the Greek matrons. Aspasia was the wife of Pericles as far as the law permitted, and many gifted women were thus led to accept a state of things for which there appeared no remedy.

The evil consequences may readily be conceived. If intellectual culture and attainments were considered incompatible with fair repute in woman, it was also found that ignorance and seclusion were not the safest guardians of domestic virtue. The efforts made by Sappho to introduce a higher state of thought and feeling had but little result. Later, when Aspasia held, at the house of Pericles, those reunions which the greatest and best men of Athens enlivened by their brilliant conversation, some Athenian matrons ventured to taste of the intellectual banquet. They were accompanied by their husbands; but no sanction was deemed sufficient to justify so bold a departure from established usage. Aspasia was exposed to the most serious accusations, and it was with difficulty that Pericles averted the danger which threatened her.

The line of demarcation being thus drawn, the Athenian women submitted to their fate, not, we may believe, without some secret repining. The poet Agathias, writing at a later date, thus describes the feelings of the Greek maiden :

“ Ah ! youths never know the weight of care
That delicate spirited women must bear.
For comrades of cheery speech have they,
To blandish the woes of thought away :
With games they can cheat the hours at home,
And whenever abroad in the streets they roam,
With the colors of painting they glad themselves.
But as for us, poor prisoned elves,
We are shut out from sunlight, buried in rooms,
And fretted away by our fancy's glooms.”

—SWAYNE.

We would here, even at the risk of anticipating our subject, note the wide difference between the domestic tastes and habits of the Greeks and Romans. The Roman wife was, legally, in complete subjection to her husband—in point of fact she was his companion, adviser, the partaker of his joys and sorrows, the presiding spirit of his home. When the taste for literature and science became general, the advantages of education were freely extended to women of the higher classes. We shall meet the names of many who were remarkable for their natural gifts and acquirements, and these—not female adventurers, but ladies of patrician rank, enjoying at the same time the honor due to intellectual supremacy and to moral worth.

Cicero tells us that the letters of Cornelia, the noble mother of the Gracchi, convinced him that they owed to her instruction much of their oratorical excellence. We read in Tacitus that Julia Procilla, the mother of Agricola, disapproved of her son's partiality for metaphysics, and obliged him to direct his attention to such studies as would be of practical utility in qualifying him as a statesman and a military commander. Such a casual mention is sufficient in itself to illustrate the position of the Roman matron.

True domestic affection depends upon mutual respect, common tastes and sympathies ; in this point also we may note the same diversity. Pliny the Younger writes to his wife in gentle reproach at some irregularity in her correspondence, telling her that when her daily letter fails, he has no better resource than to read again that of the day before. A Greek might have written in such a strain, but the epistle would not have been addressed within his domestic circle.

We will only remark, in conclusion, that if the women of Rome shared in the deep corruption which marked even the first period of the empire, there were still among them illustrious examples of virtue. This was accompanied by a noble courage which rendered their influence powerful in the highest circles of the capital. Such were the matrons who listened so eagerly to the preaching of St. Paul and of later apostles, and who were among the first protectors of the infant Church.

ERINNA.

ABOUT 610 B.C.

This poetess, a native of Lesbos, a friend and contemporary of Sappho, is described as a maiden of extraordinary beauty and genius. She died at the early age of nineteen, and of all her works only two or three epigrams have come down to us.

ON A VIRGIN OF MITYLENE WHO DIED ON HER
WEDDING DAY.

“The virgin Myrtis’ sepulchre am I ;
Creep softly to the pillared mount of woe,
And whisper to the grave, in earth below,
‘Grave ! thou art envious in thy cruelty !’
To thee now gazing here, her barbarous fate

These bride's adornments tell ; that, with the fire
Of Hymen's torch, which led her to the gate,
Her husband burned the maid upon her pyre.
Yes, Hymen ! thou didst change the marriage song
To the shrill wailing of the mourners' throng."

THE SEVEN WISE MEN OF GREECE.

THĀLĒS.

639-549 B.C.

Thales was a native of Milētus, but of Phœnician origin, being descended from Cadmus, the son of Agēnor. He was the founder of the Iōnic school of philosophy, from which were derived so many sects. Thales was from his earliest years devoted to study ; he even remained unmarried that he might not be diverted from the pursuit of knowledge by the cares of a family. It is said that when he was twenty-three years of age, an advantageous match offered, which his mother, Cleóbulīna, urged him to accept. "When a man is young," replied Thales, "it is too soon to marry ; when old, too late ; and between these two periods he ought not to have the leisure requisite to choose a wife."

This philosopher was for some time employed in the magistracy ; but as this interfered with his favorite pursuits, he soon retired from public life. He passed several years in Egypt, devoting himself principally to the study of mathematics and astronomy. The attainments of the Egyptians in the former science could not have been very great, if it be true that they learned from Thales how to measure the height of towers and pyramids by the simple calculation founded on the observation of the sun's shadow at noon.

Thales returned to his native country with a repu-

tation for learning and wisdom, which seems to have been well founded. He was the first among the Greeks to predict an eclipse ; he corrected the calendar, giving to the year 365 days, assigning thirty days to each month, except the twelfth, to which he added five to complete the solar year. He believed the sun to be a luminous body, one hundred and twenty times larger than the moon, and accounted for the phases of the latter by supposing it to be opaque, and capable of reflecting the sun's rays from one side only.

Thales attained an advanced age, enjoying the esteem of his countrymen, who consulted him on all public affairs of importance. Many wise maxims are attributed to this philosopher. He believed that the world was created or disposed for the habitation of man by an intelligent being, and he is said to have been the first Greek who maintained publicly the immortality of the soul.

To a man who questioned whether we could conceal our actions from the gods, Thales replied : " Not even our most secret thoughts." He considered self-knowledge equally difficult and important. He was the author of the precept which was afterwards engraved in gold, and placed in the temple of Apollo : " Know Thyself."

SOLON.

638-559 B.C.

The great Athenian law-giver devoted his hours of retirement to literary pursuits. Plato tells us that at the time of his death he was engaged in the composition of a poem in which he intended to celebrate the prosperity of Attica before the Ogygian flood, and

the wars which it waged with the inhabitants of the great island of Atlantis. Plato believed that if Solon had applied himself seriously to the cultivation of his poetic gifts, he might have rivalled even Homer. Of his verses we have remaining but a few fragments.

REMEMBRANCE AFTER DEATH.

(“Let not a death unwept, unhonored, be
The melancholy fate allotted me !
But those who love me living, when I die,
Still fondly keep some cherish'd memory.”)

OF THE CONSTITUTION OF ATHENS.

“I gave the people freedom clear,
But neither flattery nor fear ;
I told the rich and noble race
To crown their state with modest grace ;
And placed a shield in either's hand
Wherewith in safety both might stand.

.

The people love their rulers best
When neither cringed to nor oppressed.”

—COLERIDGE.

JUSTICE.

(“Short are the triumphs to injustice given,—
Jove sees the end of all ; like vapors driven
By early spring's impetuous blast, that sweeps
Along the billowy surface of the deeps,
Or passing o'er the fields of tender green,
Lays in sad ruin all the lovely scene,
Till it reveals the clear celestial blue,
And gives the palace of the gods to view ;
Then bursts the sun's full radiance from the skies,
Where not a cloud can form or vapor rise.

Such is Jove's vengeance ; not like human ire,
Blown in an instant to a scorching fire ;
But slow and certain ; though it long may lie,
Wrapt in the vast concealment of the sky ;
Yet never does the dread avenger sleep,
And though the sire escape, the son shall weep.”

—MERIVALE.

PITTACUS.

660-590 B.C.

Pittacus was the son of Hyrradius, a native of Mitylene. He was equally distinguished in the arts of peace and war; and his reputation for wisdom and probity was such that he was chosen by his countrymen to fill the highest offices in the State. Pittacus married a daughter of Draco, the legislator, a woman of a haughty and violent temper. She despised her husband for his inferior birth, and also on account of his personal ugliness, which amounted almost to deformity. This experience inspired Pittacus with an extreme aversion to unequal marriages. A curious story is told of the manner in which he counselled a stranger on this point. We take the poetical version from the Greek Anthology :

“ An Atarnean stranger once to Pittacus applied,
 ‘ That ancient sage, Hyrradius’ son, and Mitylene’s pride :
 ‘ Grave sir, betwixt two marriages I now have power to
 choose,
 And hope you will advise me, which to take and which refuse.
 One of the maidens, every way, is very near myself,
 The other’s far above me, both in pedigree and pelf.
 Now which is best ? ’ The old man raised the staff which
 old men bear,
 And with it pointed to some boys that then were playing there,
 Whipping their tops along the street : ‘ Their steps,’ he said,
 ‘ pursue,
 And look, and listen carefully ; they’ll tell you what to do.’
 Following them, the stranger went to see what might befall,
 And ‘ Drive the top that’s nearest you ! ’ was still their
 constant call.
 He, by this boyish lesson taught, resigned the high-born
 dame,
 And wed the maiden nearest him. Go thou and do the
 same ! ”

When Pittacus resigned the government of Mitylene, the citizens offered him a large estate, with a number of farms and vineyards, the revenues from which would have enabled him to live with splendor in his retirement. Pittacus, taking a javelin, threw it with all his force, and declared that he would only accept a tract of ground, the square of the space over which the javelin had passed. When asked the reason, he made the reply which afterwards passed into a proverb: "Half is better than the whole."

This philosopher practised temperance to such a degree that he seldom tasted the delicious wine for which his country was famed. To correct the opposite vice to which the Lesbians were addicted, he made a law that crimes committed in a state of intoxication should be visited with double punishment. The following are some of the maxims of this philosopher :

"Whatever you do, do it well."

"Be watchful of opportunities."

"The first office of prudence is to foresee threatened evils, and avert them."

"Never speak of an enterprise before it is executed, lest if you fail you may be exposed to the double misfortune of disappointment and ridicule."

CHILŌ.

FLOURISHED ABOUT 560 B.C.

Chilo was a native of Lacedæmon, and was equally celebrated for wisdom and virtue. He was one of the Ephori at Sparta, and discharged his duties as a magistrate with integrity and zeal. He died at an advanced age; it is said from excess of joy, while

embracing his son, who had been crowned at the Olympian games.

Notwithstanding the boasted wisdom of this philosopher, he believed in divination, and was disturbed by unfavorable omens. In his last days he is said to have assured his friends that, looking back upon his life, he could remember no action deserving of blame, or which he would wish to recall—a vain boast, unworthy of a sage. The following are among the sayings attributed to Chilo :

“Three things are most difficult : to keep a secret, to bear injuries, and to make a good use of time.”

“Gold is tried by the touchstone, but the hearts of men are tried by gold.”

“In all cases, a man should run moderately.”

“The first policy of a state is so to instruct citizens that each may govern well in his own family.”

“The powerful should be condescending ; it is better to govern by love than by fear.”

BIAS.

656-616 B.C.

Bias, a native of Priēnē, a small town of Caria, flourished during the reigns of Halyáttēs and Cræsus, kings of Lydia. He seems to have been possessed of every public and private virtue ; but the noble use which he made of his wealth endeared him in an especial manner to his fellow-citizens. On one occasion, some pirates offered for sale a number of young girls whom they had carried off during a descent upon Messēnē. Bias ransomed them all, and brought them to his house, where he maintained them as his own children. When a convenient opportunity offered, he restored them to their parents.

This truly great man employed his eloquence chiefly in defending the poor and distressed. He was so careful not to plead in support of an unjust claim, that it was commonly said, when speaking of a suit : “ It is a cause which Bias would have undertaken.”

When Priene was taken and sacked by the enemy, each citizen endeavored to carry something with him in his flight. Bias alone remained tranquil, and to a friend, who asked why he did not try to save some of his possessions, replied : “ I do, for I carry my all with me.”

The end of this philosopher was worthy of his life. He caused himself to be carried to the public assembly, where he spoke earnestly in defence of a friend ; then, being fatigued, he rested his head on the shoulder of one of his grandsons. When the orator who spoke on the opposite side had concluded, the judges decided in favor of Bias, who immediately expired. Bias loved poetry, and, in the intervals of more serious occupations, composed verses, chiefly on moral subjects. The following maxims are attributed to him :

“ Speak of the gods in a manner suitable to their greatness, and thank them for all your good actions.”

“ Be not importunate ; it is much better to be obliged to receive, than to oblige others to give.”

“ Live always as if you were to die that day, and also as if you looked forward to a length of years.”

“ To wish for impossibilities is a mental disease.”

“ If you are handsome, do handsome things ; if deformed, supply the defects of nature by your virtues.”

CLEOBŪLUS

636-556 B.C.

Cleobulus was a native of Lindus, in the island of Rhodes, and son of Evaḡorus, king of that city. He was distinguished by a remarkable personal beauty, and his strength almost rivalled that of Hercules, his reputed ancestor.

According to the custom of that period, Cleobulus went to Egypt to complete his education. He resided some years in that country; his father dying soon after his return to Greece, he succeeded to the government of Lindus. He married a virtuous and accomplished woman, and was as happy in his private as in his public life. Cleobulus had one daughter, whom he instructed with care in every branch of science. Cleobulina became renowned for learning, and for skill in the invention of enigmatical questions. She was at the same time kind and gracious towards all, so that she even delighted in washing the feet of her father's guests.

Cleobulus introduced into Greece the use of enigmas. Of those composed by himself we give the following example :

"I am the father of twelve sons, each of whom has thirty daughters. These differ in beauty and complexion, some being fair and others dark; they are all immortal, and yet die every day.—The year."

Maxims.—"Do good to all; to your friends, that they may continue such; to your enemies, that they may become your friends."

"Marry among your equals; if you choose a wife of rank superior to your own, you will have as many masters as she has kinsmen."

“Say little, hear much, and speak ill of no one.”

“Before you go abroad, consider what you are about to do ; on your return, reflect upon what you have done.”

PERIANDER.

585-505 B.C.

Periander was the son of Cŷpselus, tyrant of Corinth, and succeeded his father in the government of that city. His reign was marked by the most odious acts of oppression ; but his brilliant wit, and the patronage which he extended to men of letters, caused him to be ranked among the sages of Greece.

Periander on one occasion vowed a golden statue to Jupiter in case he carried off the prize at the Olympic games. He was proclaimed victor, and not having sufficient gold for the performance of his vow, he caused all the ladies present at the games to be divested of their ornaments, and thus obtained the requisite sum.

The ungoverned passions of this prince made his palace a scene of domestic crime and intrigue. He killed his wife, Melissa, in a fit of jealousy, and the remaining years of his reign were spent in a contest with his son, Lŷcophroön. This young prince, learning the manner of his mother's death, refused to live at court, or to hold any intercourse with his father. On the death of Lŷcophroön, Periander put an end to his own life.

A singular and rather incredible story is related concerning the means taken by Periander to conceal his place of burial. Being resolved to die, he sent for two young men, and showing them a lonely forest path, commanded them to repair thither at midnight, to kill the first person whom they met, and to bury

his body on the spot. Dismissing these, he summoned four others, and bade them slay two young men whom they should find together in that place, interring their bodies on the spot where they committed the deed. A still larger party was charged to kill these last, and to dispose of their bodies. Having taken these precautions, Periander met the assassins at the appointed time, and was immediately slain.

The following sentences are attributed to this prince :

"There is nothing which may not be accomplished by mental application or corporeal labor."

"Pleasures are fleeting, but glory is eternal."

"Conceal your misfortunes."

"There is nothing more precious than repose."

"A prince can have no guard so secure as the affection of his subjects."

ANÁCREON.

554-469 B.C.

This poet flourished in the sixth century before the Christian era. He was a native of Teos, a city of Ionia. After residing for some time at the court of Polýcratēs, tyrant of Samos, he accepted the invitation of Hippárchus, who sent a galley of fifty oars to convey him to Athens. On the death of Hipparchus he returned to his native country, where he died at the age of eighty-five.

The odes of Anacreon are chiefly amatory and bacchanālian. They are remarkable for sweetness and grace, but show throughout the spirit of the elegant profligate and voluptuary.

Pliny tells us that Anacreon was choked by a grape-stone which he swallowed in a draught of new wine. There seems poetical justice in such a close of a life,

passed, as we are told, in one long fever of intemperance. He is the only Greek poet of whom it can be truly said that he has not left one single sentiment that can serve the interests of virtue.

RETURN OF SPRING.

“See, the spring appears in view ;
 The Graces showers of roses strew.
 See how ocean’s wave serene
 Smooths its limpid, glassy green :
 With oaring feet the sea-duck swims ;
 The stork on airy journey skims ;
 The sun shines out in open day ;
 The shadowy clouds are rolled away ;
 The cultured fields are smiling bright
 In verdant gayety of light ;
 Earth’s garden spreads its tender fruits ;
 The juicy olive swelling shoots ;
 The grape, the fount of Bacchus, twines
 In clusters, red with embryo wines ;
 Through leaves, through boughs it bursts its way,
 And buds, and ripens on the day.”

—ELTON.

THE GRASSHOPPER.

“Happy insect ! what can be
 In happiness compared to thee ?
 Fed with nourishment divine,
 The dewy morning’s gentle wine !
 Nature waits upon thee still,
 And thy verdant cup doth fill ;
 ’Tis filled wherever thou dost tread,
 Nature’s self ’s thy Ganymede.
 Thou dost drink, and dance, and sing,
 Happier than the happiest king !
 All the fields which thou dost see,
 All the plants belong to thee ;
 All that summer hours produce,
 Fertile made with early juice.
 Man for thee does sow and plough ;
 Farmer he, and landlord thou !

Thou dost innocently joy ;
 Nor does thy luxury destroy ;
 The shepherd gladly heareth thee,
 More harmonious than he.
 Thee country hinds with gladness hear,
 Prophet of the ripen'd year !
 Thee Phœbus loves, and does inspire ;
 Phœbus is himself thy sire.
 To thee, of all things upon earth,
 Life 's no longer than thy mirth.
 Happy insect, happy, thou
 Dost neither age nor winter know ;
 But, when thou 'st drunk, and danced, and sung
 Thy fill, the flowery leaves among,
 (Voluptuous and wise withal,
 Epicurean animal !)—
 Sated with thy summer feast,
 Thou retir'st to endless rest."

—COWLEY.

CURE FOR CARE.

"When my thirsty soul I steep,
 Every sorrow 's lulled to sleep.
 Talk of monarchs ! I am then
 Richest, happiest, first of men ;
 Careless o'er my cup I sing,
 Fancy makes me more than king ;)
 Gives me wealthy Cræsus' store—
 Ought I, can I, wish for more ?
 On my velvet couch reclining,
 Ivy leaves my brow entwining,
 All my soul elate with glee—
 What are kings and crowns to me ?
 Arm ye, arm ye, men of might,
 Hasten to the sanguine fight ;
 But let *me*, my budding vine !
 Spill no other blood but thine.
 Yonder brimming goblet see !
 That alone shall vanquish me,
 Who think it better, wiser far
 To fall in banquet than in war."

SIMŌNĪDES.

556-467 B. C.

Simonides, a celebrated poet of Ceos, and the master of Pindar, was the first who applied the elegiac measure to mournful themes. This species of versification, consisting of alternāte hexameter and pentameter, was at first martial in character. Simonides became so distinguished in elegy, according to the modern signification of the word, that he is considered one of the greatest masters in this department of poetic composition. He added four letters to the Greek alphabet.

Dr. Smith says: "Simonides, when young, formed a part of the brilliant literary circle which Hipparchus collected at his court. In advanced life he enjoyed the personal friendship of Themistocles and Pausanias, and celebrated their exploits; and in his extreme old age he found an honorable asylum at the court of Syracuse." During this latter period, Simonides rendered a memorable service by acting as mediator between Hiero and Theron, king of Agrigentum, effecting a peace, when their respective armies were on the point of engaging in battle. Hiero consulted Simonides on many important occasions, and Xenophon represents the Sicilian tyrant as confiding to the aged poet the miseries and dangers which surrounded him in his exalted station.

Some anecdotes have been preserved with regard to Simonides which have rather a fabulous air. It is said that having found a body lying exposed upon the sea-shore, he caused it to be buried with the accus-

tomed rites—an act of humanity highly esteemed among the Greeks. Shortly after, the dead man appeared to him in a dream, and warned him not to go on board a certain vessel in which he had intended to embark. Simonides obeyed, and his life was thus preserved, as the vessel was lost on the voyage. An epigram is extant which refers to some representation of the poet's dream.

It is said that Simonides became avaricious in his old age, and he is reproached as being the first who wrote verses for a price. Many of his short poems were written to celebrate victories in the public games; for these he was liberally paid. Aristotle relates that when the poet was asked to celebrate, for an insignificant sum of money, a victory gained in a mule race, he declined, saying that it was beneath the dignity of the muse to praise the offspring of an ass. When a larger remuneration was proffered, he waived the objection, and dignified the subjects of his verse by speaking of the mules as “daughters of storm-footed steeds,” thus ignoring the more humble side of their pedigree.

The epigrams of Simonides have always been admired. The earliest was written apparently for a statue of Pan, erected by Miltiades, in acknowledgment of the aid afforded by that deformed deity in the battle of Marathon. The most celebrated of these epigrams is, however, that on the Spartans who fell at Thermopylæ:

“Go, tell the Spartans, thou that passest by,
That here, obedient to their laws, we lie.”

We have also the following fragment of a hymn by Simonides upon the same subject:

“Of those at famed Thermopylæ who lie,
 Glorious the fortune, bright the destiny;
 Their tomb an altar is, their noble name
 A fond remembrance of ancestral fame;
 Their death a song of triumph; neither rust,
 Nor time, that turns all mortal things to dust,
 Shall dim the splendor of that holy shrine,
 Where Greece forever sees her native virtues shine.”

The following verses refer to the Corinthians who fell at Salamis :

“Well-watered Corinth was our home before
 We lie on Salamis—Aiantian shore.
 The ships of Tyre, the Persian and the Mede,
 We routed, and thus holy Greece we freed.”

The following epitaph was inscribed on the tomb of Archedice, the daughter of Hippias, and the wife of a prince of Lámpsacus. It is taken, like the preceding epigram, from the Greek Anthology :

“Daughter of him who ruled the Athenian plains,
 This honored urn Archedice contains;
 Of tyrants, mother, daughter, sister, wife,
 Her soul was humble, and unstained her life.”)

It must be remarked that the word tyrant was not always used by the Greeks as a term of reproach. It was applied to all who gained the sovereign power otherwise than according to established law. Aristotle commends the good taste of Simonides in praising Archedice for that virtue which was most difficult to practise in the exalted position which she held.

The following beautiful fragment will give some idea of the delicacy and tenderness in which this poet excels :

LAMENT OF DANAË.

"Whilst, around her lone ark sweeping,
 Wailed the winds and waters wild,
 Her young cheeks all wan with weeping,
 Danaë clasped her sleeping child ;
 And, ' Alas ! ' cried she, ' my dearest,
 What deep wrongs, what woes are mine !
 But nor wrongs nor woes thou fearest,
 In that sinless rest of thine.
 Faint the moonbeams break above thee,
 And, within here, all is gloom ;
 But, fast wrapt in arms that love thee,
 Little reck'st thou of our doom.
 Not the rude spray, round thee flying,
 Has e'en damped thy clustering hair ;—
 On thy purple mantlet lying,
 O, mine innocent, my fair !
 Yet, to thee were sorrow sorrow,
 Thou would'st lend thy little ear,
 And this heart of thine might borrow,
 Haply, yet a moment's cheer.
 But, no ; slumber on, babe, slumber ;
 Slumber, ocean waves ; and you,
 My dark troubles, without number,—
 O, that ye would slumber too !
 Though with wrong they've brimmed my chalice,
 Grant, Jove, that, in future years,
 This boy may defeat their malice,
 And avenge his mother's tears.' "

—W. PETER.

PINDAR.

522-442 B.C.

Pindarus, the most famous among the lyric poets of Greece, was a native of Thebes, in Bœotia. He was in the prime of early manhood at the time when Xerxes invaded Greece, and when the battles of Thermopylæ and Salamis shed undying glory on the

states of Athens and Sparta. In this renown, Pindar could claim no share, as his fellow-citizens of Thebes were, with nearly half of Greece, on the Persian side. Pindar was, notwithstanding, a true Greek; he has celebrated in his odes the heroism of those brave men in whose struggle he was not permitted to take a part.

It is said that the father of the poet was a flute-player; it is certain that he gave his son a liberal education, and sent him to Athens that he might be instructed in the arts of music and poetry. Pindar returned at the age of twenty to his native city.

Two poetesses, Myrtis and Corinna, enjoyed at this time a high reputation at Bœotia. Corinna aided Pindar by her advice. We are told that she recommended the young poet to embellish his compositions by the introduction of mythical stories, but that, when he composed, soon after, a hymn in which he introduced nearly the whole Theban mythology, she smiled and said: "We should sow with the hand, not with the whole sack."

Both Myrtis and Corinna contended against Pindar in the public games; and the latter is said to have carried off the prize no less than five times.

Pindar was constantly employed by different states, and by princes of all parts of the Hellenic world, to write chōral odes for different occasions. He composed Hymns, Pæans, Processional Odes, Songs of Maidens, Mimic Dancing Songs, Encomiastic Odes (addressed to princes), Dirges, and Epinikia, or Triumphal Odes. These last were more frequently transcribed, and forty-five have been handed down to us, together with some fragments of other compositions.

The Epinikia were composed to celebrate victories

in the public games, and are divided into four books, as they relate respectively to the Olympian, Pythian, Nēmean, or Isthmian games. Such a triumph was considered to shed a lustre, not only on the successful competitor, but upon his family and fellow-citizens. It was celebrated, therefore, with great pomp in the native city of the victor, whose return home was an occasion of public rejoicing. The festival held in his honor ended with a revel called Comos, and at this, or during the procession which preceded, the Triumphal Ode, which was considered the most important feature of the celebration, was sung by a chorus.

Pindar is remarkable for boldness and sublimity, and for the strong religious spirit which pervades his poems. The triumph which he celebrates is referred to the favor of the gods, and has been merited by the moderation, virtue, or piety of the victor. The poet makes frequent and abrupt digressions; not content with celebrating the family, ancestors, and even the country of his hero, he turns to the legends of former days, and sings of the exploits of heroes and demi gods, weaving into his song the beautiful fables of Greek mythology. There is hence a want of unity in the Odes, and at times a certain obscurity, which renders it difficult to follow the poet, or understand his true meaning.

The first Olympic commences with the following lines : *

“ With water naught may vie ;
And gold, like fire at midnight blazing,
Glittering heaps outshineth far ;
But, if thou tellest of victory,
Soul, through wastes of ether gazing

* The extracts are taken from Cary's beautiful translation.

Seek, nor deem this earth supplies
 A nobler than the Olympic prize.
 Thence doth the many-voiced hymn arise,
 Which in their thought wise minstrels frame
 To warble forth the great Saturnian's name."

THE SAILING OF THE ARGO
FOURTH PYTHIAN.

"But when the flower of mariners
 To Iolcos was gone down,
 Jason, with praises on them all,
 There numbered every one.
 Next did the soothsayer for him,
 Mopsus, his aid afford,
 With holy lots and auguries,
 To put the band aboard.

"And soon as by the vessel's bow,
 The anchor was hung up ;
 Then, took the leader on the prow,
 In hands, a golden cup ;
 And on great father Jove did call ;
 And on the winds, and waters all
 Swept by the hurrying blast ;
 And on the nights, and ocean ways ;
 And on the fair auspicious days,
 And sweet return at last.
 From out the clouds, in answer kind,
 A voice of thunder came ;
 And, shook in glistening beams around,
 Burst out the lightning flame.
 The chiefs breathed free ; and at the sign,
 Trusted in the power divine.
 Hinting sweet hopes, the seer cried,
 Forthwith their oars to ply ;
 And swift went backward from rough hands,
 The rowing ceaselessly.

"Conducted by the breezy south,
 They reached the stormy Axine's mouth ;
 There a shrine for Neptune reared ;
 Of Thracian bulls, a crimson herd
 Was ready ; and heaven-founded stone,
 Wide-spread, to lay the altar on.

Peril deep before them lay ;
 And to the Lord of ships they pray,
 Amidst their ever-raging shocks,
 To 'scape the jumble of fierce rocks.
 For twain there were, alive, that whirled
 Swifter than bellowing winds are hurled.
 But now to them that voyage blest
 Brought their final day of rest."

FROM THE NINTH NEMEAN.

"In quietness and gentle ease
 The social board rejoices ;
 And recent conquest, more to please,
 Asks help of tuneful voices.
 When the full cup is standing near,
 A faltering tongue forgets its fear,
 Crown, then, the bowl for me !
 And a sweet prophet it shall be
 Of this our high solemnity.
 Let the child of the vine in his fitful mood
 O'er the silver goblets flame,
 Which with garlands won of Latona's son,
 To Chromius brought by his coursers fleet,
 From sacred Sicyon came.
 Hear, father Jove, and may this prowess gain
 The Graces to the song,
 For me to bid the victory live long
 Reaching the muses' mark in mine adventurous
 strain."

We will conclude this brief notice with the lines
 addressed to the great lyric poet by Antipater :

"As the war trumpet drowns the fawn-bone flute,
 So, when your shell is heard, all else is mute.
 Not vainly did the swarm of brown bees drip
 Their wax-bound honey on your infant lip.
 Witness the horned god, aside who flings
 His pastoral reeds and your high lyrics sings."

—ANTHOLOGY—NEAVES.

ONOMACRITUS.

516 B.C.

Onomacritus was a priest and soothsayer of Athens. He claimed to be in possession of certain oracular verses of the poet Musæus. This latter flourished in the thirteenth or fourteenth century before our era, and was a contemporary, some say a disciple, of Orpheus. He was supposed to have enjoyed the gift of prophecy in a remarkable degree.

By the command of Hipparchus, Onomacritus collected the verses of Musæus, as also certain hymns attributed to Orpheus. In executing this order, Onomacritus mingled verses of his own with the ancient oracles; the fraud was detected, and he was banished as an impostor.

It is impossible to say what portion of these verses, generally styled Orphica, or Orphic remains, are genuine relics of the earlier poets of Greece. In the following hymn we find sublime conceptions of the unity of God, and traces of primitive tradition, which seem to point to a very early epoch :

FROM THE ORPHIC REMAINS.

“One self-existent lives : created things
 Arise from him ; and he is all in all.
 No mortal sight may see him ; yet himself
 Sees all that live. He out of good can bring
 Evil to men ; dread battle ; tearful woes ;
 He, and no other. Open to thy sight
 Were all the chain of things, couldst thou behold
 The Godhead, ere as yet he stepped on earth.
 My son ! I will display before thine eyes
 His footsteps, and his mighty hand of power.

Himself I cannot see. The rest is veiled
 In clouds ; and ten-fold darkness intercepts
 His presence. None discerns the Lord of men,
 But he, the sole-begotten, of the tribe
 Of old Chaldæus ; he, to whom was known
 The path of stars, and how the moving sphere
 Rolls round this earth, in equal circle framed,
 Self-balanced on her centre. 'Tis the God,
 Who rules the breathing winds, that sweep around
 The vault of air, and round the flowing swell
 Of the deep, watery element ; and shows
 Forth, from on high, the glittering strength of flame.
 Himself, above the firmament's broad arch,
 Sits on a throne of gold ; the round earth lies
 Under his feet. He stretches his right hand
 To th' uttermost bounds of ocean, and the root
 Of mountains trembles at his touch ; nor stands
 Before his mighty power. For he alone
 All heavenly is, and all terrestrial things
 Are wrought by him. First, midst, and last, he holds
 With his omniscient grasp. So speaks the lore
 Of ancient wisdom ; so the man, who sprang
 Forth from the cradling waters, speaks : who took
 The double tables of the law from God ;
 Other to speak, were impious. Every limb
 I tremble, and my spirit quakes within."

—ELTON.

FROM THE LITHICS.

"Th' immortal gods will view thee with delight,
 If thou shouldst hold the agate, branching bright
 With veins, like many a tree, that rears its head
 In some fair garden, with thick boughs bespread,
 As the tree-agate, thus to mortals known,
 In part a branchy wood, in part a stone.
 If on thy oxen's horns this gem be bound,
 When with the cleaving share they turn the ground ;
 Or on th' unwearied ploughman's shoulder borne,
 Then shall thy furrows spring with thickening corn ;
 Full-bosomed Ceres, with the wheaten crown,
 Shall lean from Heaven, and scatter harvests down."

—IBID.

ÆSCHYLUS.

*FLOURISHED IN THE EARLY PART OF THE FIFTH
CENTURY B.C.*

This poet, who has been styled the father of tragedy, was born at Eleusis, in Attica, B.C. 525. We have but few details of his life; somewhat of his early manhood has been handed down in connection with the great historical events of the time; but the latter part of his career is involved in doubt and obscurity.

Pausanias relates that Æschylus, while yet a boy, fell asleep in a vineyard, and was favored with a dream or vision, in which Bacchus appeared, and bade him apply himself to tragic composition. As this anecdote is related on the authority of the poet himself, it would seem to prove that his enthusiasm for the drama had been excited at a very early age.

Æschylus appeared publicly as a tragic author at the age of twenty-five. He is next mentioned as fighting at Marathon, with his brothers Cynægirus and Aminias, and receiving with them the public praise due to distinguished courage. Six years later, the poet achieved his first tragic victory; but this honor, so long coveted, did not extinguish his warlike ardor. We hear of him as combating by the side of his brother Aminias, at Salamis; and later, serving with the Athenian troops, at Plataea.

Some time after these events, Æschylus left Athens and sought a retreat at the court of Hiero, king of Syracuse. Of the motives of this voluntary exile, different accounts are given. According to Ælian, the poet was accused of profanation, in bringing on

the stage certain things connected with the Eleusinian mysteries. The people were about to stone him, when Aminias, while interceding for his brother, threw off his own mantle, showing the stump of the arm which he had lost at Salamis. This appeal had its effect upon the quick and impulsive temper of the Athenians, and Æschylus was pardoned.

The danger which he had incurred, and the resentment which he felt towards his accusers, induced the poet, it is said, to abandon his country. It is more probable, however, that he was influenced by the success of Sophocles, who had carried off the tragic prize in a public contest, B.C. 468. It does not appear that Æschylus returned to Athens; his later pieces were probably presented by some friend acting in his name.

Æschylus died at Gēla, in the sixty-ninth year of his age, B.C. 456. According to some writers, his death was accompanied by extraordinary circumstances. It had been predicted to the poet that he would be killed upon his birthday, by the fall of a house. To avert this catastrophe, he passed the day in question in the open fields. As he sat absorbed in reflection, an eagle, mistaking his bald head for a stone, let fall a tortoise upon it, in order to break the shell. The poet was killed; and the prediction concerning the fall of a house was supposed to be fulfilled.

The Geloans interred Æschylus with fitting pomp, and an inscription, of which the following is a translation, was placed upon his tomb:

“Here Æschylus lies, from his Athenian home
Remote, 'neath Gela's wheat-producing loam.
How brave in battle was Euphōrion's son,
The long-haired Mede can tell, that fled from Marathon.”

The mind of Æschylus, unenlightened by revelation, struggled vainly with the problem of the nature and origin of evil. This deep and mysterious question, which led in Oriental nations to the system of dualism, or the belief in two independent creative principles, the Greeks solved by the introduction of Destiny, a sort of abstract necessity, impersonal, eternal, and ruling all things. By this power, individuals and races of men were condemned as by a terrible predestination, not only to misfortune, but to the commission of the most appalling crimes. This harsh idea of Destiny gives a coloring to all the compositions of Æschylus. We see it particularly in the *Promētheus*, where it hovers over gods and men in all its gloomy grandeur.

This poet seems to find ordinary language insufficient to express the greatness of his conceptions; hence the rugged compound words, and the multitude of epithets, which detract somewhat from the beauty of his style.

In the following lines from the *Frogs*, Aristophanes alludes to these peculiarities, and contrasts the style of Æschylus with the rhetorical ornaments of Euripides:

“With high-sounding words he will make such a pother,
 With helmeted speeches he bravely will spout,
 With clippings and shavings of rhetoric the other,
 All whirling and dancing about,
 Will stand at bay; but the deep-thoughted bard
 Will floor in the fight
 The glib-tongued wight;
 Huge words by rivets and spike-nails bound,
 Like plank on plank, he will fling on the ground,
 Blasting so bold
 Like a Titan of old.”

This great dramatist established a rule which shows a degree of refinement to which the modern drama

has not attained. This was the removal of all deeds of bloodshed and murder from the public view. This rule was rigidly observed ; we find it infringed on one occasion only, by Sophocles, in the *Death of Ajax*. Horace, in his *Art of Poetry*, gives the same recommendation for the Roman theatre :

“ But yet, let nothing on the stage be brought
Which better should behind the scenes be wrought ;
Nor force th’ unwilling audience to behold
What may with grace and eloquence be told.
Let not *Medæa*, with unnatural rage,
Slaughter her mangled infants on the stage ;
Nor *Atreüs* his nefarious feast prepare,
Nor *Cadmus* roll a snake, nor *Procne* wing the air ;
For while upon such monstrous scenes we gaze,
They shock our faith, our indignation raise.”

Æschylus provided his characters with suitable costumes, and gave them the heroic stature and appearance by the introduction of the *cothurnus*, or thick-soled buskin, and by skilfully painted masks, which were also contrived so as to give power and distinctness to the voice. This last point was of great importance, as the dramas were represented in the open air ; and the spectators in the upper tiers were at a considerable distance from the stage. The female characters were represented by men with appropriate costumes.

Horace, in the poem quoted above, thus alludes to the advance in the dramatic art :

“ *Thespis*, inventor of the tragic art,
Carried his vagrant players in a cart :
High o’er the crowd the mimic tribe appeared,
And played and sung, with lees of wine besmeared.
Then *Æschylus* a decent vizard used ;
Built a low stage ; the flowing robe diffus’d.
In language more sublime his actors rage,
And in the graceful buskin tread the stage.”

The early exhibitions of which Horace speaks consisted principally of choral songs. The first advance was made by the admitting of recitations in the intervals of the singing. Æschylus introduced a dialogue of two persons, carrying on a connected story, to which the chorus was made subservient, and the drama began to take a regular form. The chorus still occupied a prominent place ; but the singers, even when taking part in the dialogue, remained in their appropriate place, the semi-circular pit or orchestra, which intervened between the stage and the seats of the spectators.

Of sixty-six tragedies composed by Æschylus, only seven remain. These are the *Agamemnon*, the *Choëphoræ*, the *Eumenides*, the *Prometheus Bound*, the *Persians*, the *Seven against Thebes*, and the *Suppliants*.

The first three dramas constitute a complete trilogy ; the subject of the *Agamemnon* being the return of that prince from Troy, and his murder by Clytemnestra. The faithless queen, unwilling to be surprised by the sudden arrival of her husband, has established an uninterrupted chain of signal fires from Troy to Mycenæ, that she may have immediate tidings of the fall of the beleaguered city. The piece opens with the soliloquy of the watchman, who waits the shining of the fateful beacon.

WATCHMAN.

I pray the gods a respite from these toils,
This long year's watch that, dog-like, I have kept,
High on the Atridan's battlements, beholding
The nightly council of the stars, the circling
Of the celestial signs, and those bright regents,
High-swung in ether, that bring mortal man

Summer and winter. Here I watch the torch,
 The appointed flame that wings a voice from Troy,
 Telling of capture ; thus I serve her hopes,
 The masculine-minded who is sovereign here.
 And when night-wandering shades encompass round
 My dew-sprent dreamless couch (for fear doth sit
 In slumber's chair, and holds my lids apart),
 I chant some dolorous ditty, making song
 Sleep's substitute, surgeon my nightly care,
 And the misfortunes of this house I weep,
 Not now, as erst, by prudent counsels swayed.*

While the watchman is speaking, the long wished-for signal appears, and he hastens to bear the tidings to Clytemnestra. The action of the piece is interrupted by the choral songs, which, if they seem to our modern taste unseasonably long, are nevertheless of exquisite beauty. They give to the whole a lyric rather than a dramatic character. A chorus of old men advances, who sing of the Trojan war and mourn their absence from the field :

“ But we, behind that martial train
 Inglorious left remain,
 Old and frail, and feebly leaning,
 Strength as of childhood on a staff,
 Even as tender infancy,
 From war's harsh service free.
 For hoary Eld, life's leaf up-shrunk,
 Totters his three-footed way,
 Feebly feeling, weak as childhood,
 Like a dream that walks by day.”

The first choral hymn opens thus :

“ I'll voice the strain. What though the arm be weak
 That once was strong,
 The suasive breath of heaven-sent memories stirs
 The old man's breast with song,
 My age hath virtue left.

* The translations in this article, unless otherwise credited, are from Blackie.

To sing what fateful omens strangely beckoned
 The twin kings to the fray,
 What time to Troy concentuous marched
 The embattled Greek array."

The chorus continue chanting the history of the war. The sacrifice of Iphigenia is described at length, the poet wishing to suggest the original cause of the secret hate which Clytemnestra cherishes against her husband. The art of the poet is displayed in the picture of the cruel resolution with which Agamemnon disregards the terrors of the helpless victim, his own innocent child :

" Sin, from its primal spring,
 Mads the ill-counselled heart, and arms the hand
 With reckless strength. Thus he
 Gave his own daughter's blood, his life, his joy,
 To speed a woman's war, and consecrate
 His ships for Troy.

" In vain with prayers, in vain she beats dull ears
 With a father's name ; the war-delighting chiefs
 Heed not her virgin years.
 The father stood ; and when the priest had prayed,
 Take her, he said ; in her loose robes enfolden,
 Where prone and spent she lies ; so lift the maid ;
 Even as a kid is laid,
 So lay her on the altar ; with dumb force
 Her beauteous mouth bind, lest it breathe a voice
 Of curse to Argos.

" And as they led the maid, her saffron robe
 Sweeping the ground, with pity-moving dart
 She smote each from her eye,
 Even as a picture beautiful, fain to speak,
 But could not. Well that voice they knew of yore ;
 Oft at her father's festive board,
 With gallant banqueters ringed cheerly round,
 The virgin strain they heard
 That did so sweetly pour
 Her father's praise, whom heaven had richly crowned
 With bounty brimming o'er."

At length, noticing the joyful preparations, and the altars and statues crowned with flowers, the chorus questions as to the cause. Clytemnestra informs them that Troy was taken: "The self-same night that mothers this to-day."

CHORUS.

"But how? what stalwart herald ran so fleetly?"

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Hephaestus. He from Ida shot the spark;
And flaming straightway leapt the courier fire
From height to height; to the Hermæan rock
Of Lemnos, first from Ida; from the isle
The Athóan steep of mighty Jove received
The beaming beacon; hence the forward strength
Of the far-travelling lamp strode gallantly
Athwart the broad sea's back. The flaming pine
Rayed out a golden glory like the sun,
And winged the message to Macistus' watch-tower.
There the wise watchman, guiltless of delay,
Sent to the sleepless courier further speed;
And the Messapian station hailed the torch
Far-beaming o'er the floods of Eurípous.
There the gray heath lit the responsive fire,
Speeding the portioned message; waxing strong,
And nothing dulled, across Asopus' plain
The flame swift darted, like the twinkling moon,
And on Cithæron's rocky heights awaked
A new receiver of the wandering light.
The far-sent ray, by the faithful watch not spurned,
With bright addition journeying, bounded o'er
Gorgópus' lake and Ægiplānctus' mount,
Weaving the chain unbroken. Hence it spread,
Not scant in strength, a mighty beard of flame,
Flaring across the headlands that look down
On the Saronic gulf. Speeding its march,
It reached the neighbor-station of our city,
Arachne's rocky steep; and thence the halls
Of the Atridæ recognized the signal.
Such the fair tidings that my lord hath sent,
A sign that Troy hath fallen."

The chorus, half doubting, and half rejoicing in the tidings, sing of the punishment inflicted by Jove on the guilty city, of the flight of Helen, and the mourning that will be made in Greece for those who have fallen in war :

“She went, and to the Argive city left
 Squadrons shield-bearing,
 Battle preparing,
 Swords many-flashing,
 Oars many-plashing ;
 She went, destruction for her dowry bearing,
 To the Sigean shore ;
 Light with swift foot, she brushed the doorstep, daring
 A deed undared before.
 The prophets of the house loud wailing,
 Cried with sorrow unavailing,
 ‘ Woe to the Atridans ! woe !
 The lofty palaces fallen low ! ’
 The marriage scorned and the portents dread,
 The steps once faithful, fond to follow
 There where the faithful husband led !
 He silent stood in sadness, not in wrath,
 His own eye scarce believing,
 As he followed her flight beyond the path
 Of the sea-wave broadly heaving.
 And phantoms sway each haunt well known,
 Which the lost loved one wont to own,
 And the statued forms that look from their seats
 With a cold smile serenely,
 He loathes to look on.

“These sorrows pierce the Atridan chiefs,
 And, worse than these, their private griefs,
 But general Greece, that to the fray
 Sent her thousands, mourns to day ;
 And grief, stout-hearted, at each door
 Sits to bear the burden sore
 Of deathful news from the Trojan shore.
 Ah ! many an Argive heart to-day
 Is pricked with wail and mourning,
 Knowing how many went to Troy,
 From Troy how few returning !

The mothers of each house shall wait
 To greet their sons at every gate ;
 But, alas ! not men, but dust of men
 Each sorrowing house receiveth,
 The urn in which the fleshly case
 Its cindered ruin leaveth.

“For Mars doth market bodies, and for gold
 Gives dust, and in the battle of the bold
 Holds the dread scales of Fate.
 Burnt cinders, a light burden, but to friends
 A heavy freight,
 He sends from Troy ; the beautiful vase he sends
 With dust, for hearts, well lined, on which descends
 The frequent tear.
 And friends do wail their praise, this here
 Expert to wield the pointed spear,
 And this who cast his life away,
 Nobly, in ignoble fray
 For a strange woman’s sake.
 Others they mourn, who ’neath Troy’s wall
 Entombed, dark sleep prolong,
 Low pressed beneath the hostile sod,
 The beautiful, the strong !”

Probability as to time and distance was but little regarded in the earlier Greek drama ; and the choral songs are soon interrupted by the arrival of a herald from Troy, an eye-witness of its capture. When the chorus question as to Menelaüs, Talthýbius hesitates, unwilling to cloud their joy by evil tidings.

HERALD.

“I cannot gloss a lie with fair pretence,
 / The best told lie bears but a short-lived fruit.

CHORUS.

Speak the truth plainly if thou canst not pleasantly,
 These twain be seldom wedded ; here, alas !
 They stand out sundered with too clear a mark.”

Thus adjured, Talthybius tells of the shipwreck of Menelaüs and his supposed death. He has hardly

concluded, when Agamemnon himself appears in a triumphal car. In another laden with booty is seated Cassandra, the daughter of Priam, who had fallen to his lot in the division of the captives.

Clytemnestra receives her lord with every mark of joy and veneration. When he would have stepped from the chariot, she checks him :

“Nay, do not set thy foot,
The foot that trampled Troy, on common clay.
What, ho ! ye laggard maids ! Why stays your task
Behind the hour ? Spread purple where he treads.
Fitley the brodered foot-cloth marks his path,
Whom justice leadeth to his long-lost home
With unexpected train.”

In this last scene, Agamemnon is made to behave with a moderation which had not distinguished him through life, but which now serves to excite pity for his impending doom. He replies to Clytemnestra :

“Abstain
From delicate tendance that would turn my manhood
To woman’s temper. Not with purple,
Breeder of envy, spread my path. Such honors
Suit the immortal gods ; me, being mortal,
To tread on rich-flowered carpetings, wise fear
Prohibits. As a man, not as a god,
Let me be honored. Not the less my fame
Shall be far-blazoned, that on common earth
I read untapestried. A sober heart)
(Is the best gift of God ; call no man happy
Till death hath found him prosperous to the close. /
For me, if what awaits me come not worse
Than what hath fallen, I have good cause to look
Bravely on fate.”

He yields at length to the solicitations of the queen, and she welcomes him to the palace, in words to whose ominous import he gives no heed. Scarcely have the royal pair passed within the portals, when

the chorus begin to utter dark forebodings. Clytemnestra returning, strives with friendly speeches to allure Cassandra to enter the palace. When the queen is gone, the fated prophetess breaks forth into obscure and wild lamenting, answered by the wondering chorus. At length, she speaks more plainly, as she sees with inspired vision the crimes which have been committed in the royal house :

“ Ha ! the house of the Atridæ !
Well the godless house I know ;
With the dagger and the rope,
And the self-inflicted blow !
Where red blood is on the floor,
And black murder at the door—
This house—this house I know.”

She sees the banquet of Thyestes, which the sun refused to look upon ; and the ghosts of the murdered children wail to her from the battlements. Then she beholds the death prepared for Agamemnon, and mourns his fate and her own, in wild death-songs which strike terror into the hearts of the trembling chorus.

CASSANDRA.

“ Fill the cup, and brim the woe !
'Tis my own heart's blood must flow.
Me ! miserable me !
From old Troy why didst thou bring me,
Poor captive maid, to sing thee
Thy dirge and die with thee ?

CHORUS.

“ By a god thou art possessed,
And he raveth in thy breast,
And he sings a song of thee
That hath music, but no glee.
Like a dun-plumed nightingale,
That, with never-sated wail,

Crieth Itys ! Itys ! aye,
 As it scatters, in sweet flow,
 The thick blossoms of its woe,
 So singest thou to-day.

CASSANDRA.

“Ah ! the clear-toned nightingale !
 Mellow bird, thou dost not wail,
 For the good gods gave to thee
 A light shape of fleetest winging,
 A bright life of sweetest singing,
 But a sharp-edged death to me.”

Then exclaiming :

“But now the time is come, I go within
 To wail for Agamemnon and myself,
 I've done with life.”

Cassandra rushes into the palace to meet her inevitable doom. The chorus remains spell-bound, and from within the voice of Agamemnon calling for aid, is heard to sink into a dying groan. At length the encyclema revolves, the interior of the palace is seen, and Clytemnestra appears standing by the dead body of the king. She boasts of her crime :

“What I did, I did.
 Not with a random, inconsiderate blow,
 But from old Hate, and with maturing time.
 Here, where I struck, I take my rooted stand
 Upon the finished deed. Your praise or blame
 Is one to me. Here Agamemnon lies ;
 My husband, dead, the work of this right hand,
 The hand of a true workman.”

To the execrations of the chorus, she replies :

“For him, thou hast no curse ? the bloody man
 Who, when the fleecy flocks innumerable pastured,
 Passed the brute by, and sacrificed my child ;
 My best-beloved, my beautiful, to lull
 The Thracian blasts asleep ?”

The queen declares Ægisthus the partner of her throne, and tells the Argives that, while defended by his arm, "Pale fear shall never sit a guest beside her hearth!" She will bury Agamemnon:

"But no train
Of mourning men for him shall plain
In our Argive streets; but rather
In the land of sunless cheer
She shall be his convoy; she,
Iphigenia, his daughter dear.
By the stream of woes swift-flowing,
Round his neck her white arms showing,
She shall meet her gentle father,
And greet him with a kiss."

The drama is lengthened beyond its proper catastrophe by the speeches of Clytemnestra and Ægisthus, and the responses of the chorus.

The Choëphoræ, or Libation-bearers, derives its name from the band of captive Trojan women who are sent by Clytemnestra to make their offerings at the tomb of Agamemnon. They form also the chorus of the drama. The queen, being terrified by a prophetic dream, hopes to appease the angry spirit of her husband by these rites. Electra, daughter of Agamemnon, proceeds also to the tomb and meets Orestes her brother, who has come at the command of Apollo to avenge his father's death. Electra encourages him in his resolve, and the songs of the chorus urge upon him the same obligation.

The character of Clytemnestra is perfectly supported. When she sees the dead body of Ægisthus, and becomes aware of her own danger, there is no shrinking of fear. She calls for a weapon, and declares her resolve to defend herself to the last. Seeing her son, however, the mother and the woman wake within her;

her hand falls powerless, and she can only appeal to the holy ties of nature.

Orestes is shaken in his purpose; but his friend, Pylades, recalls to him the command of Apollo, and the sacred duty of vengeance. The dreadful deed is accomplished; and in the last scene, Orestes appears, holding up in view of all the people, as a justification of his act, the garment within whose folds Agamemnon was murdered:

“Behold, Ægisthus’ sword
Hath left its witness on this robe; the time
Hath paled the murderous spot; but where it was,
The sumptuous stole hath lost its radiant dye.”

The soul of Orestes is now troubled by remorse, and he declares his intention of repairing to Delphi, to purify himself from the stain of blood. Even while he is speaking, he sees dreadful shapes visible to him only, and flies in terror, pursued by the Furies of his mother.

The Eumenides opens in front of the celebrated temple of Delphi. The Pythia appears, and having prayed to the gods, enters to seat herself at the sacred tripod. She returns full of consternation, and announces what she has seen; a man, blood-stained, clinging to the altar, while dreadful forms of women, with snaky hair, are sleeping around on the sacred seats. The temple opens, and Apollo appears, guiding Orestes, whom he dismisses, promising him aid and protection at Athens:

“Hie thee
Away to Pallas’ city, and embrace
Her ancient images with close clinging arms;
Just judges there will we appoint to hear
Thy cause.”

Apollo then goes out, and the shade of Clytemnestra rises and addresses the sleeping furies in terms of bitter reproach. While she speaks they moan restlessly, but have no power to break their charmed slumber. Roused, at length, they come forth, and finding Orestes gone, circle the stage in a wild choral dance, calling for vengeance upon the fugitive. Apollo again appears, and drives them from the sacred precincts of his temple.

The scene changes to Athens and the temple of Minerva, where we find Orestes still a suppliant, pursued by the infernal chorus. Their demeanor is changed; they had appeared at Delphi like wild beasts robbed of their prey; they are now the ancient Daughters of Night, ministers of divine vengeance, chanting in lofty strains of the high and terrible office they hold among mortals:

“From primal ages hoary,
This lot, our pride and glory,
Appointed was to us;
To Hades’ gloomy portal,
To chase the guilty mortal,
But from Olympians, reigning
In lucid seats, abstaining;
Their nectared feasts we taste not,
Their sun-white robe invest not
The maids of Erebus.

“But with scourge and with ban,
We prostrate the man,
Who with smooth-woven wile,
And a fair-facéd smile,
Hath planted a snare for his friend;
Though fleet, we shall find him,
Though strong, we shall bind him,
Who planted a snare for his friend.

“This work of labor earnest,
This task severest, sternest,
Let none remove from us.

To all their due we render,
Each deeply-marked offender
Our searching eye reproveth
Though blissful Jove removeth
From his Olympian glory,
Abhorred of all and gory,
The maids of Erebus."

The terrible divinities now demand the head of Orestes, as forfeit to the infernal powers and devoted to endless torment. Minerva is at length chosen as umpire; the court of Areopagus is assembled, and Apollo pleads the cause of the suppliant. When the black and white pebbles, which the judges have cast into the urn, are counted, the numbers are found equal. Minerva throws in a white pebble, and the unhappy Orestes is at length absolved. The goddess appeases the wrath of the Furies, and assigns them a sanctuary in Attica, where they are to be worshipped as Eumenides, or Benevolent divinities. There is much in the Eumenides that is full of symbolic meaning. The Furies sleep in the temple, as it is only in the sanctuary of religion that the fugitive can find rest from the terrors of a guilty conscience. Hardly does he venture forth into the world, when the image of his murdered mother appears, and again awakes them.

The Prometheus Bound is the second piece of a trilogy, of which the first, *Prometheus the Fire-bringer*, and the third, *Prometheus Unbound*, are now lost. The trilogy was founded on an ancient myth, of which the real signification cannot be certainly ascertained. The fable is that Prometheus, a hero of Titan race, stole fire from Heaven, taught men its use, and instructed them in the arts which result from this great gift. Jove, in displeasure at this presumption, chained Prometheus to a rock, and sent a vulture to

prey unceasingly upon his liver, which was constantly renewed.

Possessing only the central piece of the trilogy, it is difficult to decide upon the interpretation which Æschylus gave to the ancient fable. Shelley and other modern writers have considered Prometheus as a martyr of liberty, bearing up with godlike strength against the punishment unjustly inflicted by Jove. We cannot believe that a grave tragic poet would have dared, at a public religious festival, to exhibit the chief deity of the Greeks in the character of an unjust and cruel tyrant. We must rather suppose that Prometheus, notwithstanding his benevolence towards men, sinned by pride and rebellion.

Æschylus is always vast in his conceptions; but in wild grandeur, the Prometheus Bound exceeds all his other works. The scenery is awful and terrific. At the utmost limits of the earth "the Scythian tract, the desert," a lonely rock frowns over the waves. Might and Force, stern ministers of Jove, hold Prometheus up to its rifted side, while Vulcan binds each limb with chains and bolts of adamant. There is little external action. Prometheus suffers with proud, defiant spirit; the Oceanides strive to comfort him. Oceanus himself, borne through the air upon his hippogriff, remonstrates with the Titan, but in vain. To all his friendly exhortations Prometheus answers, recounting the services which he had rendered to the human race, and defying the wrath of Jove :

"Under earth, under Hades,
Where the home of the shade is,
I would he had hurled me down.
I would he had plunged me, fastened thus
In the knotted chain, with the savage clang,

All into the dark, where there should be none
 Neither god, nor another, to laugh and see !
 But now the winds sing through, and shake
 The hurtling chains wherein I hang—
 And I, in my naked sorrows, make
 Much mirth for my enemy.”

Io, wandering from land to land, pursued by the wrath of Juno, pauses to relate her mournful story, and wonder at sufferings greater than her own.

When she has gone, Hermes appears as the messenger of Jove. He strives, with expostulation and menace, to bend the will of the proud Titan. Prometheus defies the celestial powers ; but scarcely has he declared his fixed purpose of revolt, when the earth, shaken to its centre, yawns beneath ; and amid lightnings, flashes, and peals of thunder, he descends, with the rock to which he is chained, into the infernal shades.

The chorus in this drama holds a doubtful position, sometimes expressing compassion for Prometheus, and again urging upon him the duty of submission. When he has spoken of his benefits to man, the chorus replies :

“ For, what is man ? behold !
 / Can he requite thy love—child of a day—
 Or help thy extreme need ? Hast thou not seen
 The blind and aimless strivings,
 The barren, blank endeavor,
 The pithless deeds, of the fleeting dreamlike race ?
 Never, O nevermore,
 May mortal wit Jove’s ordered plan deceive.”

We give some of the concluding verses :

CHORUS.

“ This Hermes suits his reasons to the times ;
 At least I think so !—since he bids thee drop
 Self-will for prudent counsel. Yield to him !
 When the wise err, their wisdom proves their shame.”

PROMETHEUS.

"Unto me the foreknower, this mandate of power,
 He cries, to reveal it !
 And scarce strange is my fate, if I suffer from hate,
 At the hour that I feel it !
 Let the locks of the lightning, all bristling and whitening,
 Flash, coiling me round !
 While the æther goes surging 'neath thunder and scourging
 Of wild winds unbound !
 Let the blast of the firmament whirl from its place
 The earth rooted below,—
 And the brine of the ocean, in rapid emotion,
 Be it driven in the face
 Of the stars up in heaven, as they walk to and fro !
 Let him hurl me anon into Tartarus—on—
 To the blackest degree,
 With necessity's vortices strangling me down !
 But he cannot join death to a fate meant for me !

HERMES.

"Why the words that he speaks and the thoughts that he thinks
 Are maniacal—sad !
 And if Fate, who hath bound him, just loosens the links,
 Yet he's nigh to be mad.
 Then depart ye who groan with him,
 Leaving to moan with him—
 Go in haste ! lest the roar of the thunder, in nearing,
 Should blast you to idiocy, living and hearing.

PROMETHEUS.

"Ay ! in act, now, in word, now no more
 Earth is rocking in space !
 And the thunders crash up with a roar upon roar—
 And the eddying lightnings flash fires in my face,
 And the whirlwinds are whirling the dust round and round,
 And the blasts of the winds universal, leap free,
 And blow each upon each, with a passion of sound,
 And æther goes mingling in storm with the sea !
 Such a curse on my head, in a manifest dread,
 From the hand of your Zeus has been hurtled along !
 O my mother's fair glory ! O, Æther ! enringing
 All eyes with the sweet common light of thy bringing,
 Dost thou see how I suffer this wrong ? "

—MRS. BROWNING.

The Suppliants. In this drama, Dánaüs and his daughters are represented as soliciting the protection of Pelásgus against the importunate suit of the fifty sons of Ægyptus. This piece formed part of trilogy, and, standing alone, possesses little interest.

CHORUS FROM THE SUPPLIANTS.

- “ O would that Jove might show to men
His counsel as he planned it ;
But ah ! he darkly weaves the scheme,
No mortal eye hath scanned it.
It burns through darkness brightly clear,
To whom the god shall show it ;
But mortal man, through cloudy fear,
Shall search in vain to know it.
- “ From their high-towering hopes the proud
In wretched rout he casteth.
No force he wields ; his simple will,
His quiet sentence blasteth.
(All godlike power is calm ;) and high
On thrones of glory seated,
Jove looks from Heaven with tranquil eye,
And sees his will completed. /
- “ High-throned above the highest as the lowest,
Beyond thee none, and mightier none thou knowest,
The unfearing, all-feared one,
When his deep thought takes counsel to fulfil,
No dull delays clog Jove’s decided will ;
He speaks, and it is done.”

The Seven against Thebes has for its subject the war between the Theban brothers, Eteócles and Poly-nices, for the possession of their father’s kingdom.

The Persians is so called because the chorus is composed of aged Persians. The subject is the destruction of the fleet of Xerxes, at Salamis. This drama is purely historical, and, if we except the ghost of Darius, has no machinery.

CHORUS FROM THE PERSIANS.

"We are the Persian watchmen old,
The guardians true of the palace of gold,
Left to defend the Asian land.
When the army marched to Hellas' strand ;
Elders chosen by Xerxes the king,
The son of Darius, to hold the reins,
Till he the conquering host shall bring
Back to Susa's sunny plains.
But the spirit within me is troubled and tossed,
When I think of the king and the Persian host ;
And my soul, dark-stirred with the prophet's mood
Bodes nothing good.
For the strength of the Asian land went forth,
And my heart cries out for the young king's worth
That marshalled them on to the war ;
Nor herald, nor horsemen, nor wandering fame
Since then to the towers of the Persian came."

SOPHOCLES.

BORN 495 B.C.

This poet was born at Colonus, a village near Athens, B.C. 495. Æschylus was then thirty years of age, and Euripides was born fifteen years later. Sophocles was therefore, during the greater part of his life, contemporary with both. Authorities differ as to the rank held by Sophilus, the father of the poet ; but it is certain that the latter enjoyed every advantage which the schools of Athens afforded. His high intellectual gifts were cultivated and refined by careful instruction in the arts of poetry and music ; and the exercises of the gymnasium added grace and strength to the personal beauty celebrated by his contemporaries. These gifts and accomplishments were enhanced by a nobility of character, and a sunny, genial temper,

which secured to the young poet the love as well as the admiration of his countrymen.

If Sophocles was happy in his natural gifts, he was favored also in the circumstance that his lot was cast in Greece during the most glorious period of her history, an era equally illustrious for military triumphs and for the highest achievements of literature and art. The minds of men are naturally exalted by great events and heroic deeds; and the contemporaries of Sophocles were thus prepared to receive with enthusiasm the loftiest conceptions of the poet.

When Cimon returned victorious from the island of Scyros, he brought to Athens the bones of Theseus, which were interred in that city with great pomp. During the solemnity Æschylus contended for the prize of tragedy, Cimon and nine other generals being judges. Before this illustrious tribunal Sophocles presented his first drama, and won his first victory; he was then twenty-five years of age. From this time to his death, a period of about sixty-three years, he continued to bring forward tragedies for the approbation of his countrymen. Twenty times he took the first prizes; the second was still oftener awarded to him, and he never ranked so low as third.

Age seemed only to mature the genius of this extraordinary man. It is said that he had passed his eightieth year when his older sons became jealous of the affection shown to a grandson by a second wife. They endeavored to deprive their father of the management of his property, on the ground that he was in his dotage and incapable. As his only answer, Sophocles read before the judges a portion of the *Œdipus Colonus* which he had just composed. The cause was immediately dismissed; the judges rose to

do honor to the poet, and the whole assembly conducted him in triumph to his house.

Sophocles followed at one time the profession of arms, and held the rank of general, Thucydides and Pericles being among his colleagues. At a more advanced age he was chosen priest to Alon, an ancient hero of Greece. If the early victories of the poet were interwoven with the triumphs of his country, the success of his later years were robbed of half their splendor by the public calamities, which followed fast upon one another, until the defeat of Ægospotamos completed the ruin of the republic. Sophocles was spared this last sorrow, as he had expired some months before. The manner of his death is uncertain. According to one writer it was caused by joy at being proclaimed the tragic victor. Another describes his death to excessive exertion in reciting a long paragraph of the *Antigone*. The account of his funeral seems authentic, if we omit the supernatural embellishment. The Athenians were closely besieged, and the Lacedæmonian troops occupied D  c  lea, the family burying-place of Sophocles. Bacchus appeared twice in visions to Lysander, the Spartan general, commanding him to provide for the funeral rites. The warning made a due impression; a herald was despatched to Athens to arrange a truce, and the obsequies of the poet were celebrated with fitting pomp.

Of one hundred and thirty dramas written by Sophocles, there remain seven: *Ajax*, *Electra*, *Trachini  *, *Philoct  t  s*, *  dipus T  yr  nnus*, *  dipus at Colonus*, and the *Antigone*.

In grandeur and boldness of conception, Sophocles is surpassed by   schylus; in harmony of verse, correct taste, and a true conception of the beautiful in

art, he is admitted to excel his great model. *Æschylus* delights in the convulsions of a primitive world, where gods and Titans, and the mysterious powers of nature, are personages of the drama. *Sophocles* treats of men, and while his heroes are of a grander type than we see in the real world, they are subject to human passions ; their sorrows and even their crimes, possess a human interest.

In dramatic effect, *Sophocles* excels ; he introduced a third person into the dialogue ; restrained the chorus to its proper function, and heightened the illusion of the whole by skilfully-disposed ornaments and painted scenery.

The most striking characteristics of this poet are his freedom from everything approaching licentiousness, and his deep sense of natural religion. Passages might be pointed out which would seem to show that *Sophocles*, while accepting the mythology of Greece, had some knowledge of a purer faith, and believed, though perhaps vaguely, in the unity of God. We find the following lines quoted by *Justin Martyr* in his "Exhortation to the Greeks." It is taken from some work of *Sophocles* now lost :

"In very deed and truth, God is but one,
Who made the heavens, and all the vast of earth,
The exulting sea and all the strength of winds ;
But we, poor mortals, wandering in our hearts,
Set up poor cheats to soothe our souls' distress :
Carved images of God in wood and stone,
Or forms of well-wrought gold, or ivory,
And offering sacrifice to these, with rites
And solemn feasts, we think we worship Him."

While noticing the spirit which pervades the works of *Sophocles*, we would say a few words regarding the general tendency of Greek poetry, and the influence

exercised upon art and literature by the mythology of the Hellenic race, and the vagueness of their religious belief. These remarks seem appropriate in this connection, as the writings of Sophocles may be taken to represent the highest point, whether in religion or morality, attained by any poet of his country.

The literature of a nation, when not modified by revelation, grows up in accordance with exterior circumstances, as naturally as the dark fir clothes the border of the Scandinavian fiord, and the olive and vine deck in rich luxuriance the hills that look down on the sunny waves of the Ægean. Pre-eminent in physical and intellectual gifts, the Greeks represented, perhaps, the noblest type of the human race. Their lot was cast in a land where every influence of sun and sky favored the genial spirit, by which all their faculties seemed attuned to harmony with the world around. With a keen susceptibility to the beautiful, they deified the powers of nature, personified in myth and fable, until grove and fountain, the gloom of cavern depths and the cloud-capt summit of Olympus, were peopled with divinities. Superstition, even, shaped itself to these kindly influences, and for the grim idols of other lands, we have forms, prized even now as models of an ideal beauty.

It may be truly said that the ancient Greek accomplished all that is possible to finite man. And yet, this training in the school of nature culminated in a civilization which was little more than the highest development of the sensual life, ennobled and refined, it is true, but sensual still, and of the earth, earthly. There were exceptions, many and illustrious, but such was the prevailing character of that cultivation whose results were at once so brilliant and so brief.

It has been said that the Greeks invented the poetry of joy ; but the gladness which would seem to be the peculiar spirit of Hellenic verse is not without its alloy. The grave Egyptians placed a skeleton at the festive board, but the conditions of our mortality supply a far more solemn warning. Death is ever in the midst of life, and life itself, with its wrongs and sorrows, seems, at times, a burden too heavy to endure. Hence the depth of tragic utterance which we find in the Grecian muse when the sunshine has faded from the earthly scene, and the world beyond, vague as a shadow or a dream, has naught to offer in exchange. Even Sophocles exclaims :

“ Of all the dreams of bliss that are,
Not to be born is best by far.
The next, by far the best for man
To speed as fast as speed he can.”

Such quotations might be multiplied, but we desire only to notice that want which gives to Grecian tragedy so painful an intensity. Antigone may die sooner than violate the eternal laws of God ; but there is no hope to exalt the spirit or cheer the parting hour. The brightness of the earthly life that might have been is the theme of her last lament. Beyond, all is doubt and obscurity. Poets might sing of the Elysian fields, but even to the favored hero one day of the light of earth was worth the immortality of that shadowy realm.

We can only mention briefly the tragedies which remain to us from this great poet. The action of the *Ajax* is extremely simple. The hero had contended for the arms of Achilles, which were bestowed upon Ulysses. In the frenzy of his passion, he would have taken a dreadful revenge upon the Greeks, but Mi-

nerva deceived his eyes so that he turned his arms against the sheep and oxen in the camp. Ajax recovers from his brief madness, and finding himself in the midst of the slaughtered cattle, is overwhelmed with shame and despair. He seeks a solitary place and stabs himself with the sword which had been the gift of Hector.

The frenzy of the hero and its consequences are the punishment of his pride and contempt of the gods.*

“Oft the mighty fall
 In deep affliction, smit by angry Heaven,
 When, mortal born, to human laws they yield not,
 As mortals should, submission. Thus spake
 The prophet, and long since was Ajax deemed
 To have a mind disturbed. When first he left
 His native soil,—‘Be conqueror, oh, my child!’
 His father said; ‘but conqueror under God.’
 Impious and proud his answer was: ‘The worst
 Of men,’ he cried, ‘assisted by the gods,
 May conquer: I shall do the work without them.’
 Such were his boastings, and when Pallas once,
 With kind assistance, urged him to the fight,
 Dreadful and horrible was his reply:
 ‘Go, queen, to other Grecians lend thy aid;
 ’Tis needless here; for know, where Ajax is,
 The foe will never come.’ By words like these,
 And pride ill-suited to a mortal’s power,
 Did he offend the vengeful deity.”

Tecmessa, the wife of Ajax, describes his state when the frenzy had passed:

“He raves not now; but like the southern blast,
 When lightnings cease and all the storm is o’er,
 Grows calm again; yet, to his sense restored,
 He feels new griefs; for O, to be unhappy,
 And know ourselves alone the guilty cause
 Of all our sorrows, is the worst of woes.”

* The translations in this article, unless otherwise credited, are from Plumptre.

Ajax, resolved on death, rejects the prayers of his wife, and takes a last farewell of his infant son ; then says :

“Take hence the child, with speed ; nor in the tents
Let there be wailings : women ever love
To brood o'er sorrows and indulge their woe,
Shut to the door. The wound that must be cut,
No wise physician will attempt to heal
With incantation, elegy, or song.”

Having wandered from the camp to execute his dreadful purpose, Ajax makes his last prayer :

“And now, O Jove (for first to thee 'tis fit
We pay due honors), I address my prayer :
I ask not much : I ask thee but to send
Some passing stranger here to bear the news
Of my unhappy fate to Teucer's ear.
By my own sad hand
As I shall perish, let my foes be slain
By those whom most they love !
And thou, O Sun ! who drivest the flaming car
Along the vaulted sky ; when thou shalt see
My native soil, O check thy golden reins ;
Tell the sad story to my helpless sire.
And my afflicted mother, when she hears
The mournful tale, her grief will fill the land
With dreadful lamentations ; but 'tis vain
To weep my fate, the business must be done.
O Death ! look on me ; Death, I come to thee :
Soon shall we meet ; but thee, O glorious Day,
And yon bright charioteer, the Sun, no more
Shall I behold ; even now thou hearest my last,
My dying words. O Light ! O sacred soil
Of Salamis, my country, and her gods !
O noble Athens ! O my loved companions !
Ye rivers, fountains, and fair fields of Troy,
And you, my honored parents ! O farewell !
'Tis the last word Ajax shall speak on earth.
The rest he uttered to the shades below.”

(Falls on his sword.)

The subject of the *Electra* is most tragical. When Agamemnon was murdered by his wife Clytemnestra, aided by Ægisthus, the young Orestes was saved from sharing the fate of his father. By the contrivance of his sister Electra, he was conveyed to the court of Strophius, where he was educated. Orestes returns secretly from exile, and is encouraged by Electra to avenge the murder of their father. The piece closes with the death of Clytemnestra, who falls by the hand of her son.

In the passage which describes the meeting of Electra with her brother, there is much beauty and tenderness. The death of Clytemnestra, and the closing scene in which Ægisthus discovers the body of the queen, and is hurried into the inner apartments of the palace that he may die upon the spot stained with the blood of Agamemnon, are in the last degree thrilling and terrible.

In the *Trachiniæ*, which might rather be styled the *Dying Hercules*, we have the story of the poisoned robe sent by Déjanira to her husband, her despair on hearing the fatal consequences, the rage of the hero, and his death.

The mission undertaken by Ulysses and Neoptolemus to induce Philoctetes to return to the siege of Troy, forms the subject of a tragedy much admired for its portrayal of character and the display of human passion.

The *Œdipus Tyrannus*, *Œdipus at Colonus*, and the *Antigone*, form a trilogy continuing the same tragical story. The first opens with the description of a pestilence at Thebes, which the oracle declares should only cease when the murderer of Laius, the former king, would be discovered and banished from Boeotia. *Œdipus*, who believes himself to be the son

of Polybus, king of Corinth, conducts the examination with ardor. The investigation leads to the discovery of his real parentage. It is proved that he is the son of Laius, and that he had slain him unknowingly in a chance encounter.

The queen Jocasta is the first to perceive the fatal truth. She rushes from the scene, and the lamentations of the attendants and of the chorus announce that she has killed herself in despair. Œdipus, filled with horror at the crimes which he had involuntarily committed, considers himself unworthy to see the light of day, and tears out his eyes with his own hand. Blind, and about to go into perpetual exile, he thus addresses his brother :

“For *my* fate, let it pass ! My children, Creon !
 My sons—nay, they the bitter wants of life
 May master—*they* are men ! My girls—my darlings—
 Why, never sate I at my household board
 Without their blessed looks—our very bread
 We brake together ;—Thou ’lt be kind to them
 For my sake, Creon—and (O latest prayer !)
 Let me but touch them—feel them with these hands,
 And pour such sorrow as may speak farewell
 O’er ills that must be theirs ! By thy pure line—
 For thine is pure—do this, sweet prince. Methinks,
 I should not miss these eyes, could I but touch them.
 What shall I say to move thee ? Hark ! those sobs !
 And do I hear my sweet ones ? Hast thou sent,
 In mercy sent, my children to my arms ?
 Speak—speak—I do not dream !

“CREON.—They are thy children,
 I would not shut thee from the dear delight
 In the old time they gave thee.

“ŒD.—Blessings on thee !
 For this one mercy may’st thou find above
 A kinder god than I have. Ye—where are ye ?
 My children—come ! Nearer and nearer yet.”

—BULWER.

The unhappy king goes forth with but one comfort to soothe his misery, the companionship and loving care of his daughter Antigone. Later the gentle Ismène joins her sister in these offices of filial piety.

In the *Œdipus at Colonus*, we find the king, worn with long wanderings, seeking a place for repose. Antigone leads him unknowingly to a grove sacred to the Furies. Athens is seen in the distance.

“O *Œdipus* ! my poor unhappy father !
Far as my eyes can reach I see a city,
With lofty turrets crowned ; and, if I err not,
This place is sacred, by the laurel shade,
Olive and vine thick planted, and the songs
Of nightingale sweet warbling through the grove.
Here sit thee down, and rest thy wearied limbs
On this rude stone ; 'tis a long way for age
Like thine to travel.”

An Athenian warns the strangers of their profanation, but *Œdipus* refuses to leave the sacred grove. He knows that his sorrows are drawing to a close, and the Daughters of Night, no longer Furies, but *Eumenides*, or Gentle Ones, are at length appeased, and welcome him to their awful shades. A sacrifice of expiation is however imposed, and this duty *Œdipus*, unable to perform, commits to the pure hands of his children :

“Let one of you go on, and do these things,
For one soul acting in the strength of love
Is mightier than a thousand to atone.
But what ye do, do quickly.”

Creon, meanwhile, learns from an oracle that glory and prosperity await the land where the bones of *Œdipus* should rest. He strives, therefore, to compel the unhappy exile to return to Thebes. Theseus, who is then reigning in Athens, defends his guest, and Creon is obliged to retire.

The sons of Œdipus, Polynices and Eteocles, contend for the throne of Thebes, and Antigone endeavors by the most moving entreaties to dissuade Polynices from warring against his native country. She is unable to turn him from his purpose, and her efforts are equally unavailing when she hopes to effect a reconciliation between him and his father. The aged king loads his sons with the bitterest imprecations, foretelling the tragical fate reserved for them.

Œdipus, being at length warned that his death is near, permits Theseus only to witness his last moments, and know the secret of his sepulchre. He leads the Athenian hero to a cavern well known to tradition as one of the entrances to the infernal regions. Antigone and Ismene have meantime made the appointed libations.

“ These sadly pleasing rites at length discharged,
Nor aught unfinished of the sire's command,
The infernal Jove deep thundered from beneath.
The timid virgins trembled as they heard,
And smote their breasts with wailings long and loud.
Then over them his hands the old man clasped,
And ‘ O my children ! ’ said he, ‘ from this day
Ye have no more a father—all of me
Withers away—the burden and the toil
Of mine old age fall on ye nevermore :
Sad travail have ye borne for me, and yet
Let one thought soften grief when I am gone—
The thought that none upon the desolate world
Loved you as I did ; and in death I leave
A happier life to you ! ’ Thus movingly,
With clinging arms and passionate sobs, the three
Wept out aloud, until the sorrow grew
Into a deadly hush ; nor cry nor wail
Starts the drear silence of the solitude.
Then suddenly a bodiless voice is heard—
It called on him ; it called : ‘ Ho, Œdipus,
Why linger we so long ? ’ ”

Œdipus, after solemnly consigning his children to Theseus, dismisses them ; Theseus only remains with the old man.

“ So groaning we depart—and when once more
We turned our eyes to gaze, behold, the place
Knew not the man ! The king *alone* was there,
With close-press’d hand over his shaded brow,
As if to shut from out the quailing gaze
The horrid aspect of some ghastly thing
That nature durst not look on.
A little after we beheld him bent,
In humble adoration to the earth,
And then to heaven preferring ardent prayer.
But how the old man perished none can tell
Save Theseus ; for nor lightning-breath of heaven,
Nor blasting tempest from the ocean borne,
Was heard or seen ; but either was he rapt
Aloft by wings divine, or else the shades,
Whose darkness never looked upon the sun,
Opened, in mercy, to receive him.” —BULWER.

Antigone and Ismene express their grief in bitter lamentations :

“ ANTIGONE.—Alas ! I only wish I might have died
With my poor father ; wherefore should I ask
For longer life ?
O, I was fond of misery with him ;
E’en what was most unlovely grew beloved
When he was with me. O my dearest father !
Beneath the earth now in deep darkness hid,
Worn as thou wert with age, to me thou still
Wert dear, and shall be ever ! . . .
. . . Even as he wished he died,
In a strange land—for such was his desire—
A shady turf covered his lifeless limbs,
Nor unlamented fell ! for O ! these eyes,
My father, still shall weep for thee, nor time
E’er blot thee from my memory.”

The Antigone celebrates the heroic piety of that devoted maiden who incurs the penalty of death by performing the funeral rites for her brother Polynices.

When the Theban princes had fallen in their unnatural contest, Creon interred Eteocles with the usual pomp ; but Polynices was exposed, unburied, to the beasts and birds of prey, and guards were set lest any one might approach the corpse to perform the rites of burial.

Antigone has been compared to the Cordelia of Shakespeare ; but if we except the traits of piety and filial love, faithful to death, there is but little resemblance in the characters. The virtue of Antigone is cast in the grand heroic mould. At times she betrays a depth of tenderness in her passionate grief for the dead, and her moving expostulations with her unhappy kindred ; but her general character partakes of the austerity which was required by the spirit of ancient tragedy.

Ismene, loving and gentle, but shrinking from danger, fears to join her sister in rendering the last rites to their brother.

“ISMENE.—Poor weak woman,
Helpless, nor formed by nature to contend
With powerful man ; we are his subjects too ;
Therefore to this, and worse than this, my sister,
We must submit ; for me, in humblest prayer
Will I address me to the infernal powers
For pardon of that crime which, well they know,
Sprang from necessity, and then obey ;
Since to attempt what we can never hope
To execute, is folly all and madness.”

How foreign to the spirit of the gentle daughter of Lear is the sternness of Antigone's reply :

“ANTIG.—Wert thou to proffer, what I do not ask—
Thy poor assistance, I would scorn it now.
Act as thou wilt—I go to bury him ;
And good it were, that having done, to die.
I'll do the pious deed, and lay me down

By my dear brother, loving and beloved ;
We'll rest together. To the powers below
'Tis fit we pay obedience ; more time have I
In which to win the favor of the dead
Than that of those who live ; for I shall rest
Forever there. But thou, if thus it please,
Count as dishonored what the gods approve."

Later, love conquers fear. Ismene catches a spark of her sister's heroism, and prays that she may be her companion in the living tomb to which she is condemned. Antigone answers with stern brevity :

"Thy choice was life ; 'tis mine to die."

The reply of Antigone to her tyrannical kinsman is replete with tragic dignity, mingled with that deep religious feeling which we have already noticed in the works of this poet.

"CREON.—Didst thou then dare transgress our royal mandate ?

"ANTIG.—I did not deem thy edicts strong enough,
Coming from mortal man, to set at naught
The unwritten laws of God that know no change.
They are not of to-day nor yesterday,
But live forever, nor can man assign
When first they sprang to being. Not through fear
Of any man's resolve, was I prepared
Before the gods to bear the penalty
Of sinning against these. I knew before
That I must die, though thou hadst ne'er proclaimed it,
And if I perish ere th' allotted term,
I deem that death a blessing. Who that lives,
Like me, encompassed by unnumbered ills,
But would account it blessedness to die ?
If then I meet the doom thy laws assign,
It nothing grieves me. Had I left my brother,
From my own mother sprung, on the bare earth
To lie unburied, that, indeed, might grieve me ;
But for this deed I mourn not."

—DALE.

During the entire play the attitude of the chorus is singular. There is no indignation expressed at the harsh commands of Creon, no intercessory prayer for the doomed maiden. On the contrary, her fate is held to be the just penalty of her disobedience; and when, at last, Antigone, as she is led to death, gives vent to her feelings in a touching and passionate lament, the chorus answers:

“Religion bids us grace the dead;
But might, when regal might bears sway,
Must never, never be condemned.
Thine own unbending pride hath sealed thy doom.”

Schlegel supposes that the poet wished to exalt the character of his heroine by leaving her unsupported by any word of sympathy or praise.

Hæmon, the son of Creon, to whom Antigone had been betrothed, having pleaded in vain for the life of the unhappy maiden, resolves to share her fate. Entering the tomb, he finds she has hanged herself in despair. Creon, meanwhile, is terrified by the threats of the blind Tiresias, and his own remorse. He proceeds to the sepulchral cave, intending to save Antigone, if there should yet be time. He finds only the lifeless remains of his victim, and near them, weltering in blood, the body of Hæmon. Eurydice, the wife of Creon, refuses to survive her son, and the piece closes with the lamentations of the king and the responses of the chorus.

FRAGMENTS.

“Since we have rightly made our prayer to God,
Let us now go, O boys, to where the wise
Impart their knowledge of the muse’s arts.
Each day we need to take some forward step,
Till we gain power to study nobler things.
Evil a boy will learn without a guide

With little labor, learning from himself ;
 But good, not even with his teacher near,
 Dwells in his soul, but is full hardly gained :
 Let us, then, boys, be watchful and work hard,
 Lest we should seem with men untaught to rank
 The children of a father far from home."

"What may be taught I learn, what may be found
 That I will seek for, what must come by prayer,
 For that I ask the gods."

"What house hath ever gained prosperity,
 Puffed up with pride, without the kindly grace
 Of woman's nobler nature."

"But when bereavement falls upon her house
 A woman has the purpose of a man."

"One wise man is no match for many fools."

"No greater evil can a man endure
 Than a bad wife, nor find a greater good
 Than one both good and wise ; and each man speaks
 As judging by the experience of his life."

"If men by tears could heal their several ills,
 And by their weeping bring the dead to life,
 Then gold would be of far less price than tears."

"Chance never helps the men who nothing do."

"'Tis only in God's garden men may reap
 True joy and blessing."

"Be sure, no lie can ever reach old age."

EURIPIDES.

480-408 B. C.

Euripides was born at Salamis, on the day rendered memorable by the great naval victory won by the Greeks near that island. His name is formed like a patronymic from the Euripus, the scene of the first successful resistance to the Persian navy. It has been asserted that Clito, the mother of Euripides, was a

seller of herbs, and Aristophanes alludes sarcastically to this circumstance. The liberal and costly education bestowed upon the poet would seem to prove, however, that his father Mnēsarchus, was a person of wealth and position ; if we suppose that he had made an unequal marriage, the difficulty is explained.

Euripides applied himself, by his father's desire, to the exercises of the gymnasium, and was, in his seventeenth year, more than once crowned in the public contests of the Athenian youth. He cultivated a natural taste for painting, and some of his pictures were preserved for a long time at Mēgara. Under the celebrated rhetorician Prōdicus, Euripides acquired the oratorical skill which is remarked in all his dramas. He was so far favored as to count also among his instructors Anaxágoras, and the great Socrates. With the latter he lived on terms of the closest intimacy ; and many of the moral reflections introduced in his plays are plainly Socratic in sentiment.

At the age of twenty-five, Euripides presented a tragedy which took the third place in the public contest. Four years later, he took the first prize ; and he continued to present dramas which won first, second, and third places.

The poet was unhappy in his domestic relations ; he was twice married, and it is thought that the conduct of his wives led him to form the low estimate of female character which is apparent in his dramas. These domestic troubles, combined with other causes of discontent, led Euripides to accept an invitation to the court of Archēlāüs, king of Macedonia. Here he passed his latter years in the enjoyment of wealth and honor. He died, B.C. 408, in the seventy-third year of his age. The Athenians begged that the remains

of their favorite poet might be interred in his native city. This Archelaüs refused, and Euripides was buried at Pella, his obsequies being celebrated with the utmost pomp.

Euripides composed about eighty tragedies, of which eighteen are extant, namely : Alcēstis, Medea, Hippolytus, Hecuba, Heraclidæ, Supplices Mulieres, Ion, Hercules Furens, Andromache, Iphigenia at Tauris, Tróadēs, Electra, Helena, Iphigenia at Aulis, Bacchæ, Phœnissæ, Cyclops, and Ōrestes.

When we compare these dramas with the works of Æschylus and Sophocles, we are struck by the different spirit which animated these great tragedians. In Sophocles, the grandeur of Æschylus is reduced to fairer proportions, but the poet never descends to the commonplace of life ; his men and women retain much of the old heroic type, and in the delineation of his worst characters, there is something which speaks a nature fallen indeed, but not altogether degraded. In Euripides, on the other hand, we have the traditional heroes of Greece brought down to the standard of ordinary life. He delights in exhibiting their moral failings ; they are not only mean, but they speak of their most contemptible actions without shame, sometimes even boastfully. Sophocles is reported to have said that he drew men as they ought to be, while Euripides painted them as they were. On this principle, many writers have attempted to justify the low ground taken by the latter, forgetting that the poet who does nothing to elevate the standard of thought and feeling among men, has failed in the noblest part of his mission. We cannot, however, accept the assertion, that Euripides painted men as he saw them that the age which has left us so many illustrious names

could have furnished no higher type of character than he presents in his dramas. His heroes are unmanly in their lamentations, undignified in adversity, and under the influence of the gentler feelings, weak and effeminate. There is a constant straining after dramatic effect; and it would seem that Euripides sought only to please, careless by what means.

This tragedian introduces moral reflections on every occasion; but the sentiments expressed by his characters are sometimes calculated to counterbalance the effect of these formal maxims. The following verse from the *Hippolytus* :

 (“The tongue swore, but the mind was unsworn,”

seems, however it may be explained by the context, to furnish an excuse for perjury. Another sentiment of Euripides :

 (“For a kingdom it is worth while to commit injustice ;
but in other circumstances, it is well to be just,”

was frequently quoted by Cæsar. It would seem that the moral sense of the Athenians was still sufficient to rebuke these errors. It is related, that when Euripides put into the mouth of Bellérophon a contemptible panegyric upon riches, ending with these words :

 “ If Venus (who bore the epithet of golden) shone like gold, she would indeed deserve the love of men,”

the spectators were so much offended that they made an outcry, and would have stoned both actor and poet, but Euripides sprang forward and exclaimed :

 “ Wait only till the end—he will be requited accordingly.”

In the same manner, when he was reproached with the blasphemous and abominable language used by

Ixíon, he defended it, saying that the piece ended with his being tortured upon the wheel.

Notwithstanding these and other defects, Euripides possessed genius of a high order, and excels in tenderness and pathos. The remarks made above will be better understood by some short illustrations.

The *Alcestis* is among the most pleasing of the works of this poet. The plot is exceedingly simple. Apollo, when banished from Olympus, had tended the flocks of Admetus, king of Thessaly. Before returning to the celestial abode, he obtained from the Fates, that when the hour of death had come for Admētus, his life might be prolonged, provided some one should die willingly in his stead. When Admetus was attacked by a mortal illness, there was no one found to make this sacrifice, except his young and beautiful wife Alcestis. An attendant, coming all in tears from the palace, thus informs the chorus of what was taking place within.

“CHORUS.—Illustrious in her death, the best of wives,
The sun in his wide course sees not her equal.

ATTENDANT.—The best of wives indeed : who will gain
say it ?

What could the brightest pattern of her sex
Do more ? What greater proof give of the honor
She bears her husband, than a ready will
To die for him ! This all the city knows.
How in the house she hath demeaned herself
Will claim thy admiration. When she knew
The destined day was come, in fountain water
She bathed her lily-tinctured limbs, then took
From her rich chests, of odorous cedar formed,
A splendid robe, and her most radiant dress :
Thus gorgeously arrayed, she stood before
The hallowed flames, and thus addressed her prayer :
‘O queen, I go to the infernal shades,
Yet, ere I go, with reverence let me breathe

My last request. Protect my orphan children,
 Make my son happy with the wife he loves,
 And wed my daughter to a noble husband :
 Nor let them, like their mother, to the tomb
 Untimely sink, but in their native land
 Be blest through lengthened life to honored age.
 Then to each altar in the royal house
 She went, and crowned it, and addressed her vows,
 Plucking the myrtle bough : nor tear, nor sigh
 Came from her, neither did the approaching ill
 Change the fresh beauties of her vermeil cheek.
 Her children, as they hung upon her robes
 Weeping, she raised, and clasped them to her breast,
 Each after each, as now about to die.
 Each servant through the house burst into tears
 In pity of their mistress ; she to each
 Stretched her right hand ; nor was there one so mean
 To whom she spoke not, and admitted him
 To speak to her again. Within the house
 These are our griefs. Admetus must have died,
 Have perished ; but escaping, is immersed
 In sorrows, which his heart shall ne'er forget."

Alcestis takes leave of her husband with many tender words. She confides her children to his love, with this last request :

"In their mother's house
 Let them be lords : wed not again, to set
 A stepdame o'er my children, some base woman
 Who wants my virtues ; she through jealousy
 Will work against their lives, because to thee
 I bore them : do not this, I beg thee, do not ;
 For, to the offspring of a former bed,
 A stepdame comes sharp as a serpent's tooth."

Admetus gives the required promise, and Alcestis breathes her last.

We have now an example of the want which is to be observed in so many of the characters drawn by Euripides. Admetus does not, even in the extreme passion of his grief, reproach himself for having

accepted the sacrifice of his heroic wife ; nor does he once express the wish, so natural in such a moment, that he rather had died himself at the appointed hour. We might account for this by supposing that the tragedian held the life of a woman as of little weight ; that he believed, according to the sentiment which he puts into the mouth of Iphigenia :

“ More than a thousand women, is one man,
Worthy to see the light of life.”

This cannot, however, excuse the language addressed by the king to his aged father. The latter comes to assist at the funeral rites of Alcestis, and offer gifts at her tomb. These are rejected with disdain, and Admetus reviles his father in the bitterest terms, because he had not offered to die for him. Phérès replies with equal severity, and taunts his son with his cowardly love of life. He tells him that he had discovered

“ A fine device that thou mightst never die,
Could'st thou persuade who at the time might be
Thy wife, to die for thee.”

Admetus, at length, drives his father and mother from the palace, declaring that as they were unwilling to die in his place, he will neither see them while living, nor render them the last honors when dead. It would be hard to find in the whole range of the drama a scene more utterly ignóble in sentiment.

Admetus appears to more advantage when he learns that a guest, ignorant of the calamity which had befallen, seeks his hospitality. He orders that his wants be supplied in a distant part of the house, and forbids his servants to trouble the stranger by informing him of their affliction. The gêst so gener

ously entertained, chances to be Hercules. The hero rewards his host by descending to the infernal shades and rescuing Alcestis, whom he restores to Admetus.

Hercules first appears feasting riotously ; singing, and reproving the attendants for their gloomy looks. Later, returning from the shades, he brings Alcestis, veiled, and presents her to the mourning king. Admetus, determined to keep the fidelity he had sworn to his wife, refuses to look upon the stranger, or even to touch her hand. In the entire scene, with the happy discovery which closes the drama, the poet descends almost to the level of modern comedy.

Euripides seems to delight in exciting painful emotions, and in painting the extremes of human misery ; he has thence been called the most tragic of poets. It may be doubted, however, whether the display of hopeless suffering passively endured is a proper office of the tragic muse. Where there is no hope, compassion wearies. We must do more than pity, we need the excitement of contending passions, and the admiration which a heroic resistance, or an equally heroic submission to misfortune, never fails to arouse. A catastrophe will always strike with a force and pathos proportioned to the struggle which has been made to avert it.

The murder of Astýanax, in the Troades (Trojan Dames), furnishes an example of this defect. Andromache has been chosen as a wife by Neoptólemus, the son of Achilles. The unhappy widow of Hector, grieving over these forced espousals, caresses her little son, her only consolation in accumulated sorrow. A herald appears to demand the child in behalf of the Greeks, who have decreed that he shall be thrown

headlong from the Trojan walls. This dreadful intelligence Talthybius communicates in a set speech to the wretched mother, advising her to bear the trial patiently, and comforting her with the hope that, if she abstains from any violent expression of resentment, the Greeks will give burial rites to her son, and will be inclined to treat her more courteously. This prudent advice appears to take effect. We have, indeed, a touching lamentation over the child, who clings in terror to his mother ; but there is nothing of the passionate grief, the last efforts of despair, which we would look for in so terrible a crisis.

Andromache is led away to the Grecian ships ; and in a little while the body of Astyanax, borne in his father's shield, is laid at the feet of Hecuba. The aged queen breaks forth in bitter lamentations, as she views the mangled limbs, the golden hair defiled with dust and gore. Then, as she recognizes the shield of Hector, still bearing the mark of his strong grasp, all her sorrows are renewed. This scene must have been heart-rending in actual representation ; but the mind revolts against such a display of helpless suffering, and of guilt triumphant and unrebuked.

The character of Hecuba is wanting in tragic dignity. After such multiplied and unexampled sorrows, there might have been a deep pathos in speechless woe, or in the wanderings of a mind unsettled by grief. Hecuba, however, wearies by an unceasing flood of lamentation ; she rolls in the dust with covered head, and calls the attention of the chorus to these violent demonstrations, which she declares to be proofs of her extreme affliction. She is, notwithstanding, self-possessed enough to give Andromache counsel which sounds strangely from the mother of

Hector. Alluding to her forced nuptials with Neoptolemus, she says :

“ But do thou,
O my loved child, on Hector's fate no more
Fix thy sad thoughts, not all thy streaming tears
Will save him ; *honor then thy present lord,*
And with thy gentle manners win his soul ! ”

If Hecuba wearies by her loquacious grief, she excites feelings only of horror, when, in the drama which bears her name, we see her, with the assistance of her fellow-captives, murdering the children of Polymnestor, and tearing out the eyes of the wretched king.

The Iphigenia in Aulis contains much that is beautiful. The scene in which the heroine entreats her father to spare her life, now embracing his knees, and again making Orestes, her infant brother, hold up his little hands in supplication for her, is touching in the extreme.

When Achilles learns the cruel deception practised on Clytemnestra and her daughter, his indignation is aroused, and we are prepared to see one hero, at least, who will act with all the generous ardor of youth. We are soon undeceived. In a long and studied speech, Achilles makes known his feelings. He is incensed, not because of the fate of an unhappy maiden cruelly deceived, but rather that the Grecian chiefs took the liberty of using his name without his consent. He intimates that if they had consulted him, he would have concurred in their plans, and would have yielded Iphigenia as a sacrifice ; since he was held of no esteem, they shall not touch the hem of the virgin's robe. The effort which he makes to save her is, notwithstanding, very feeble, and when the hapless maiden expresses (as usual, in a very long

discourse) her determination to offer herself as a victim for her country, he appears much relieved. Achilles compliments Iphigenia on her resolution, with a warmth arising, in part, it would seem, from the feeling that he has been extricated from an awkward position. Then, as if ashamed of his readiness to accept her sacrifice, he suggests that she may change her mind, and begs that, in such a case, she will not fail to let him know. The hero then departs, and we hear of him next as making libations around the altar on which the virgin is about to be immolated.

Aristotle remarks upon this drama that the character of the heroine is not well sustained ; that Iphigenia imploring, bears no resemblance to Iphigenia offering herself as a victim for her country.

The *Electra* of Euripides will scarcely bear a comparison with the drama of Sophocles of the same name, or with the *Choëphoræ* of Æschylus. The latter displays great dignity not unmixed with pathos, and in the *Electra* of Sophocles, the heroine is grand even in the abased condition to which she is reduced at the court of Clytemnestra and Ægisthus. Euripides, on this occasion as on so many others, degrades his characters in the attempt to heighten the sympathy for their misfortunes. According to the drama, *Electra* has been compelled by Ægisthus to marry an aged peasant ; the latter, however, compassionates her rank and misfortunes, and she lives as a daughter in his wretched hut. The unhappy princess comes forth, bearing a pitcher on her head, which is shorn in servile fashion, and proceeds to draw water from a neighboring fountain, while her husband goes to labor in the field. A chorus, consisting of rustic virgins, invites her to take part in a festival of Juno, but Elec-

tra points to her tattered garments, and refuses their solicitations.

This extreme homeliness of detail continues throughout the piece, but a more serious fault remains to be noticed. Orestes accepts the hospitality of Ægisthus, joins him in a sacrifice which he is offering to the rural nymphs, and slays him before their altar. A more odious treachery is practised towards Clytemnestra. Electra deceives her mother by a message, stating, falsely, that she had given birth to a son, and that she wished the sacrifices offered which were usual on such occasions. The feelings of a mother wake in the heart of the guilty queen; she hastens to her daughter; but she has hardly crossed the threshold of the lonely hut, when she is overpowered and murdered.

We give a passage from the *Orestes*, which forms a supplement to this drama. The unhappy prince, distracted by remorse, and full of anxiety regarding the sentence about to be passed upon him, has fallen into a troubled slumber; his sister Electra watches at his feet.

“ELECTRA.—Softly, softly, fall the sound
Of thy footsteps on the ground!
Gently, gently, like the breath
Of a lute-song in its death;
Like the sighing of a reed
Faintly murmuring to be freed,
So softly let thy whispers flow.

CHORUS.—Like a reed, as soft and low!

ELECT.—Aye, low, low! but tell me why,
Damsels, ye are lingering by?
Long hath sorrow torn his breast;
Now his weary eyes have rest.

CHOR.—How fares it with him? Dearest, say.

ELECT.—Sad and tearful is my lay,

Breathing on his couch he lieth,
Still he suffereth, still he sigheth.

CHOR.—What sayest thou, mourner?

ELECT.— Woe to thee,
If the dewy slumber flee!

CHOR.—Yet wail I his unhappy state;
Abhorred deeds of deadly hate,
Rage of vindictive, torturing woes,
Which the relentless powers of heaven impose.

ELECT.—Unjust, unjust, the stern command,
The stern command Apollo gave
From Themis' seat, his ruthless hand
In blood, in mother's blood, to lave.

CHOR.—He stirs, he moves his covering vest.

ELECT.—Wretch! thy voice has broke his rest.

CHOR.—And yet, I think, sleep locks his eye.

ELECT.—Wilt thou begone! Hence wilt thou fly;
That quiet here again may dwell!

CHOR.—Hush, hush! he sleeps again.

ELECT.—'Tis well!

CHOR.—Awful queen, whose gentle power
Brings sweet oblivion of our woes,
And in the calm and silent hour,
Distills the blessings of repose,
Come awful night!

ELECT.—Softly let your warblings flow;
Farther, a farther distance keep:
The far-off cadence, sweet and low,
Charms his repose and aids his sleep.

CHOR.— Tell us what end
Awaits his miseries?

ELECT.— Death! that end I fear.
He tastes no food.

CHOR.—Death then indeed is near.

ELECT.—When Phœbus gave the dire command
To bathe in mother's blood his hand,
By whom the father sunk in dust,
He doomed us victims.

CHOR.—Dire these deeds, but just.

OREST. (*waking*).—O gentle Sleep, whose lenient power
thus soothes
Disease and pain, how sweet thy visit to me,
Who wanted thy soft aid! Blessing divine,

That to the wretched givest wished repose,
 Steeping their senses in forgetfulness !
 Where have I been ? Where am I ? How brought hither ?
 My late distraction blots remembrance out."

—S. T. COLERIDGE.

From a chorus in the *Alcestis* :

' We will not look on her burial sod,
 As the cell of sepulchral sleep :
 It shall be as the shrine of a radiant god,
 And the pilgrim shall visit that blest abode,
 To worship and not to weep.
 And as he turns his steps aside,
 Thus shall he breathe his vow—
 Here slept a self-devoted bride ;
 Of old, to save her lord she died,
 She is a spirit now."

From a chorus in the *Hecuba* :

" The fatal hour was midnight's calm,
 When the feast was done, and sleep like balm
 Was shed on every eye,
 Hushed was the chorus symphony,
 The sacrifice was o'er.
 My lord to rest his limbs had flung,
 His idle spear in its place was hung,
 He dreamed of foes no more.
 And I, while I lost my lifeless gaze,
 In the depth of the golden mirror's blaze,
 That my last light task was aiding,
 Was wreathing with fillets my tresses' maze,
 And with playful fingers braiding.
 Then came a shout ;
 Through the noiseless city the cry rang out,
 ' Your homes are won, if ye scale the tower,
 Sons of the Greeks ! is it not the hour ? ' "

FRAGMENTS.

" Dear is that valley to the murmuring bees ;
 And all, who know it, come and come again.
 The small birds build there ; and at summer noon,
 Oft have I heard a child, gay among flowers,
 As in the shining grass she sate concealed,
 Sing to hers -lf."

—ROGERS.

"This is true liberty, when free-born men,
 Having to advise the public, may speak free ;
 Which he who can, and will, deserves high praise ;
 Who neither can, nor will, may hold his peace :
 What can be juster in a state than this ?"

—MILTON.

"There is a streamlet issuing from a rock,
 The village girls, singing wild madrigals,
 Dip their white vestments in its water clear,
 And hang them to the sun. There first I saw her.
 Her dark and eloquent eyes, mild, full of fire,
 'Twas heaven to look upon ; and her sweet voice,
 As tunable as harp of many strings,
 At once spoke joy and sadness to my soul !"

—ROGERS.

OLD COMEDY.

As tragedy took its rise from the dithyrambic chorus, so the origin of comedy may be traced to the choral songs, which delighted the Greeks at the rural festivals following the harvest and vintage. It was at first entirely extempore, and was accompanied by extravagant gestures and feats like those of mountebanks. Susarion, who lived about the time of Solon, is said to have set the example, followed afterwards by Thespis, of carrying his actors, or rather buffoons, from place to place in carts, and disguising them by smearing their faces with lees of wine. Epicharmus, who resided at the court of Hiero, was the first who brought comedy to a written form ; it is believed that his pieces were principally burlesques of the old heroic legends. Plato considers that Epicharmus was the founder of comedy, as Homer was of tragedy.

Among the writers of the old Attic Comedy were Chionides, Magnes, Cratinus, Eupolis, and Cratēs. This species of composition may be said to have reached at the same time its highest and lowest point

in the plays of Aristophanes. Eúpolis was the rival of this great comedian, and many bitter jests passed between them. Magnes, Cratinus, and Crates are mentioned in the "Knights," in a manner which shows that after delighting the multitude for a time they had outlived their popularity. Of Cratinus, the great comedian thus speaks :

"Who Cratinus may forget, or the storm of whim and wit
Which shook theatres under his guiding?
When Panegyric's song poured her flood of praise along
Who but he on the top wave was riding?
Foe nor rival might him meet, plane and oak ta'en by the
feet,
Dim him instant and humble prostration;
For his step was as the tread of a flood that leaves its bed,
And his march it was rude desolation.

Thus in glory was he seen while his years as yet were green,
But now that his dotage is on him,
God help him! for no eye of all those who pass him by
Throws a look of compassion upon him.
'Tis a couch, but with the loss of its garnish and its gloss;
'Tis a harp that hath lost all its crowning;
'Tis a pipe where deffest hand may the stops no more com-
mand,
Nor on it divisions be running."

The old comedy was remarkable for personality and extreme license. In the middle comedy this freedom of bringing forward and ridiculing real characters was restrained, having been prohibited by law. The new comedy represented by Philemon and Menander resembles in every important particular that of modern times.

ARISTOPHANES.

*FLOURISHED TOWARDS THE CLOSE OF THE FIFTH
CENTURY B.C.*

This poet, the most celebrated among the comic writers of Greece, was born about the year 456 B.C. It is believed that he was a native of Ægina, and by adoption only, a citizen of Athens. Of his private life but little is known. He lived to the advanced age of seventy ; but the dates of his birth and death are altogether uncertain.

Of sixty comedies written by Aristophanes, eleven are still extant. They possess much historic interest, being satires upon the political events of the day, and caricatures, sometimes sufficiently gross, of the leading men of Athens.

The language of Aristophanes is distinguished by its elegance and purity ; and he employs it with equal skill in familiar dialogue and the highest flights of poetic fancy. This Attic refinement is heightened by contrast with the rough dialects and provincialisms of the common people, and the broken Greek of the foreigners, who are personages of the drama. Notwithstanding the rare and versatile powers of this writer, his works are sadly disfigured by low buffoonery and vulgar jests. Many of the dramas of Aristophanes had a useful end in view, as in the *Acharnians*, where he paints the miseries of the Peloponnesian war, which had, during six years, spread desolation throughout Greece. Even with such ends in view, he cannot, as Schlegel well remarks, "be justified in sinking so low ; whether he was incited to it by

natural coarseness, or whether he thought it necessary to gain the mob, that he might tell them such bold truths."

The Acharnians was the earliest of the extant plays of Aristophanes. In this drama the poet attacks the policy of Pericles, and exposes, as we have remarked, the miseries caused by the Peloponnesian war. The subject was likely to be popular in Athens, where the citizens were shut up, year after year, in the close and pestilential city, their farms and villas being devastated at will by the Lacedæmonian troops.

Dikaiopolis, a native of Achárnæ, a rich borough of Attica, is represented as making a separate peace for himself and family, and enjoying all the rural pleasures, the festivities and good cheer, which belong to a state of tranquil ease. The states of peace and war are happily contrasted, and the play is diversified by many amusing incidents.

The peace-loving Dikaiopolis is placed in a situation of some danger by the enmity of his fellow citizens, the Acharnians, who are so enraged at the private treaty which he has made with the enemy, that they resolve to stone him. Dikaiopolis wishes to speak in defence of the Lacedæmonians; and it is agreed that he shall do so, standing the while behind a block, on which he is to lose his head if he does not succeed in convincing his hearers. Dikaiopolis, feeling his critical position, applies to Euripides to be fitted out for the occasion in some of the tattered garments which his heroes usually wore for the purpose of exciting compassion upon every distressful occasion.

In the following dialogue the house of Euripides is supposed to occupy the place of the encyclema, which revolved whenever it was necessary to show

the interior of a building. Hence the expression,
 "roll round."

6
 DIKAIOPOLIS—CEPHISOPHON—EURIPIDES.

"DIKAIOPOLIS.—'Tis time I pluck up all my courage
 then,

And pay a visit to Euripides.

Boy, boy !

CEPHISOPHON—Who's there ?

DIKA.—Is Euripides within ?

CEPH.—Within, and not within ; canst fathom that ?

DIKA.—How within, yet not within ?

CEPH.— 'Tis true, old fellow.

His mind is out collecting dainty verses,
 And not within. But he's himself aloft,
 Writing a tragedy.

DIKA.— Happy Euripides,
 Whose servant here can give such witty answers.
 Call him.

CEPH.—It may not be.

DIKA.— I say you must though,—
 For hence I will not budge, but knock the door down.
 Euripides, Euripides, my darling !
 Hear me, at least, if deaf to all besides.

'Tis Dikaiopolis, of Chollis, calls you.

EURIPIDES.— I have not time.

DIKA.—At least roll round.

EURIP.— I can't.

DIKA.—You must.

EURIP.—Well, I'll roll round. Come down I can't ; I'm
 busy.

DIKA.—Euripides !

EURIP.— What would'st thou with thy bawling ?

DIKA.—What ! you compose aloft and not below.

No wonder if your muse's bantlings halt.

Again, those rags and cloak right tragical,

The very garb for sketching beggars in !

But sweet Euripides, a boon, I pray thee.

Give me the moving rags of some old play ;

I've a long speech to make before the chorus,

And if I falter, why, the forfeit's death.

EURIP.—What rags will suit you ? Those in which old
 CENEUS,

That hapless wight, went through his bitter conflict ?

DIKA.—Not Ceneus, no,—but one still sorrier.

EURIP.—Those of blind Phoenix ?

DIKA.— No, not Phoenix either ;

But another, more wretched still than Phoenix.

EURIP.—Whose sorry tatters can the fellow want ?

'Tis Philoctetes' sure ! You mean that beggar ?

DIKA.—No ; but a person still more beggarly.

EURIP.—I have it. You want the sorry garments
Bellerophon, the lame man, used to wear.

DIKA.—No,—not Bellerophon. Though the man I mean
Was lame, importunate, and bold of speech.

EURIP.—I know. 'Tis Telephus the Mysian.

DIKA.— Right.

Yes, Telephus : lend me his rags, I pray you.

EURIP.—Ho, boy ! Give him the rags of Telephus.
There lie they ; just upon Thyestes' rags,
And under those of Ino.

CEPH— Here ! take them.

DIKA. (*putting them on*).—Now, Jove ! who lookest on,
and see'st through all,

Your blessing, while thus wretchedly I garb me.

Prythee, Euripides, a further boon,

It goes, I think, together with these rags :

The little Mysian bonnet for my head.

EURIP.—A rare device, i' faith ! Take it and welcome.

DIKA.—For thee, my blessing ; for Telephus my thoughts.
'Tis well ; already words flow thick and fast.

Oh ! I had near forgot—a beggar's staff, I pray.

EURIP.—Here, take one, and thyself too, from these doors.

DIKA. (*aside*).—See'st thou, my soul,—he'd drive thee from
his door,

Still lacking many things. Become at once

A supple, oily beggar. (*Aloud*). Good Euripides,

Lend me a basket, pray ;—though the bottom's scorched,
't will do.

EURIP.—Poor wretch ! A basket ? What's thy need on't ?

DIKA.—No need beyond the simple wish to have it.

EURIP.—You're getting troublesome. Come, pack—be off.

DIKA. (*aside*).—Faugh ! Faugh !

(*Aloud*). May heaven prosper thee, as thy good mother.

EURIP.—Be off, I say !

DIKA.— Not till thou grant'st my prayer.

Only a little cup with broken rim.

EURIP.—Take it and go ; for know you're quite a plague.

DIKA. (*aside*).—Knows he how great a pest he is himself ?
(*Aloud*). But, my Euripides ! my sweet ! one thing more :
Give me a cracked pipkin stopped with sponge.

EURIP.—The man would rob me of a tragedy complete.
There—take it, and begone.

DIKA.— Well ! I am going.
Yet what to do ? One thing I lack, whose want
Undoes me. Good, sweet Euripides !
Grant me but this, I'll ask no more, but go—
Some cabbage-leaves—a few just in my basket !

EURIP.—You'll ruin me. See there ! a whole play's gone !

DIKA. (*seemingly going off*).—Nothing more now, I'm
really off. I am, I own.

A bore, wanting in tact to please the great.
Woe's me ! Was ever such a wretch ! Alas !
I have forgot the very chiefest thing of all.
Hear me, Euripides, my dear ! my darling.
Choicest ills betide me ! if e'er I ask
Aught more than this ; but one—this one alone :
Throw me a pot-herb from thy mother's stock.

EURIP.—The fellow would insult me—shut the door.

(*The encycytema revolves, and EURIPIDES and CEPH. retire.*)

DIKA.—Soul of me, thou must go without a pot-herb.
Wist thou what conflict thou must soon contend in
To proffer speech, and full defence for Sparta ?
Forward, my soul ! the barriers are before thee."

—BLACK.

The Knights had for its avowed object the overthrow of Cleon, then in the height of his power and popularity. Aristophanes had, in the *Acharnians*, declared that it was his intention, at some future day, "to cut him into shoe-leather ;" and this threat was not uttered in vain. Nevertheless, such was the terror inspired by this powerful and insolent demagogue, that no actor dared to personate him, nor could an artist be found to model a mask representing his well-known features. Aristophanes, nothing daunted, undertook the part, and appeared as Cleon,

unmasked, using only the primitive disguise of smearing his face with wine-lees.

In this play Athens is represented as a house, the people are personated by the master, Demus, a cross-grained, jealous, and self-indulgent old gentleman. He has bought a Paphlagonian slave, by trade a tanner. This is Cleon, who appeals to the superstition of his master by flattering oracles, and to his self-indulgence by supplying his table with choice dishes. By these means, and by a mixture of insolence and servility, he obtains a complete ascendancy over Demus, and becomes a terror to his fellow-slaves. Two of these, Nicias and Demosthenes, who represent the aristocratic party, are resolved to foil him with his own weapons. This they do by setting up a rival, in the person of a sausage-maker, more vulgar, insolent, and in every point a greater adept in the arts which constitute a popular leader, than even Cleon himself. The plot succeeds; the sausage-maker is reformed, and Demus, being boiled in a magic caldron, comes out a respectable Athenian of the olden time, worthy of the days of Thermopylæ and Marathon.

The Clouds, the most celebrated of the dramas of Aristophanes, was written against the Sophists. The poet takes Socrates as their representative, and holds him up to public ridicule. This was altogether unjust, as Socrates was in every point opposed to the teaching of the Sophists. Aristophanes probably cared but little for distinctions existing between the schools of philosophy. He wished a type; and the peculiarities of Socrates, his strongly-marked features, absent manners, his careless dress, and the total disregard which he manifested for the common usages of society, pointed him out as a fit person to represent,

in caricature, the professors of that soaring wisdom which dwelt in abstraction, above the common cares of life. It would have been unreasonable to hope that Aristophanes could have foregone so fair an opportunity for satire.

The popular idea that this attack was instrumental in bringing about the trial and death of Socrates is entirely without foundation. This tragical event took place twenty-four years later; and during this interval Aristophanes made the acquaintance of the philosopher, whom he met frequently on the most friendly terms.

The personification of the Clouds must have had a very striking effect. A solemn invocation calls them from their ethereal dwelling; their approach is preceded by thunder; chanting a lyric ode, they descend slowly to earth; then, after a pause which awakens the expectation of the beholder, they come personally on the stage as a troop of females appropriately attired, and advancing in a floating, cloud-like dance.

According to the drama, Strepsiades, a wealthy Athenian, finding himself well-nigh ruined by his son's extravagance, betakes him to the Sophists, that he may learn the unjust logic that will enable him to shirk the payment of his debts. The wit of Aristophanes consists frequently in taking a metaphor literally, and Socrates carries out the common saying of an absent person being "up in the clouds," by making his first appearance descending through the air in a basket.

Strepsiades perceives the philosopher in this singular predicament, and is obliged to call repeatedly before he can rouse him from his contemplation. This passage will give some idea of the manner in which Aristophanes mingles mere buffoonery with verses of surpassing beauty. Of the cloud chorus, Ruskin says :

"The visible cloud character which every line of this passage brings out into more dewy and bright existence, is to me as refreshing as the real breathing of mountain winds."

SOCRATES—STREPSIADES.

" STREPSIADES.—

Socrates ! Socrates !

Sweet Socrates !

SOCRATES—Mortal ! why callest thou me ?

STREPS.—O, first of all, please tell me what you are doing ?

SOCR.—I walk on air, and contemplate the sun.

STREPS.—O then from a basket you condemn the gods,
And not from the earth, at any rate ?

SOCR.—

Most true.

I could not have searched out celestial matters

Without suspending judgment, and infusing

My subtle spirit with the kindred air.

If from the ground I were to seek these things,

I could not find, so surely doth the earth

Draw to herself the essence of our thought.

The same, too, is the case with water-cress.

STREPS.—Hillo ! what's that ?

Thought draws the essence into water-cress ?

Come down, sweet Socrates, more near my level,

And teach the lessons which I come to learn.

SOCR.—And wherefore art thou come ?

STREPS.—

To learn to speak.

For owing to my horrid debts and duns,

My goods are seized ; I'm robbed, and mobbed, and plundered.

SOCR.—How did you get involved with your eyes open ?

STREPS.—A galloping consumption seized my money.

Come, now ; do let me learn the unjust logic

That can shirk debts ; now do just let me learn it.

Name your own price, by all the gods I'll pay it.

SOCR.—Old man, sit you still, and attend to my will, and
hearken in peace to my prayer.

O master and king, holding earth in your swing, O measureless infinite air ;

And thou, glowing ether, and clouds who enwreath her
with thunder, and lightnings, and storms,

Arise ye and shine, bright ladies divine, to your student in
bodily forms.

STREPS.—No, but stay, no, but stay, just one moment,
I pray, while my cloak round my temples I wrap.
To think that I've come, stupid fool, from my home, without
either beaver or cap!

SOCR.—Come forth, come forth, dread clouds, and to
earth your glorious majesty show ;
Whether lightly ye rest on the time-honored crest of Olym-
pus environed in snow,
Or tread the soft dance 'mid the stately expanse of old
Ocean, the nymphs to beguile,
Or stoop to enfold, with your pitchers of gold, the mystical
waves of the Nile,
Or around the white foam of Mæotis ye roam, or Mimas all
wintry and bare,
O ! hear while we pray, and turn not away from the rites
which your servants prepare.

CHORUS.— Clouds of all hue,
Rise we aloft with our garments of dew.
Come from old Ocean's unchangeable bed,
Come till the mountain's green summits we tread,
Come to the peaks with their landscapes untold,
Gaze on the earth with her harvests of gold,
Gaze on the rivers in majesty streaming,
Gaze on the lordly, invincible sea,
Come, for the eye of the ether is beaming,
Come, for all nature is flashing and free.
Let us shake off this close-clinging dew
From our members eternally new,
And sail upwards the wide world to view.

Come away ! Come away !

SOCR.—O goddesses mine, great clouds and divine, ye
have heeded and answered my prayer.
Heard ye their sound, and the thunder around, as it thrilled
through the petrified air ?

STREPS.—Yes, by Zeus, and I shake, and I'm all of a
quake, and I fear I must sound a reply,
Their thunders have made my soul so afraid, and those terri-
ble voices so nigh.

SOCR.—Don't act in our schools like those comedy fools,
with their scurrilous scandalous ways.
Deep silence be thine ; while this cluster divine their soul-
stirring melody raise.

CHORUS.— Come then with me,
Daughters of mist, to the land of the free.

Come to the people whom Pallas hath blest ;
 Come to the soil where the mysteries rest ;
 Come where the glorified temple invites
 The pure to partake of its mystical rites ;
 Holy the gifts that are brought to the gods,
 Shrines with festoons and with garlands are crowned,
 Pilgrims resort to the sacred abodes,
 Gorgeous the festivals all the year round.
 And the Brömian rejoicings in spring,
 When the flutes with their deep music ring,
 And the sweetly-toned choruses sing.

Come away ! Come away !

STREPS.—O Socrates, pray, by all the gods, say, for I
 earnestly long to be told,
 Who are these that recite with such grandeur and might ?
 are they glorified mortals of old ?

SOCR.—No mortals are there, but clouds of the air, great
 gods who the indolent fill :
 These grant us discourse, and logical force, and the art of
 persuasion instil,
 And periphrasis strange, and a power to arrange, and a
 marvellous judgment and skill.

STREPS.—So then when I heard their omnipotent word,
 my spirit felt all of a flutter,
 And it yearns to begin subtle cobwebs to spin, and about
 metaphysics to stutter,
 And together to glue an 'idea' or two, and battle away in
 replies:
 So, if it's not wrong, I earnestly long to behold them my-
 self with my eyes.

SOCR.—Look up in the air, towards Parnes, out there, for
 I see they will pitch before long
 These regions about.

STREPS.—Where ? Point me them out.

SOCR.— They are drifting, an infinite throng,
 And their long shadows quake over valley and brake.

STREPS.— Why, whatever's the matter to-day ?
 I can't see them a bit.

SOCR.—There, they're close by the pit.

STREPS.—Ah ! I just got a glimpse, by the way.

SOCR.—There, now you must see how glorious they be, or
 your eyes must be pumpkins, I vow.

STREPS.—Ah ! I see them proceed ; I should think so,
 indeed ; great powers ! they fill everything now.

SOCR.—So, then, till this day that celestials were they, you never imagined nor knew?

STREPS.—Why, no, on my word, for I always had heard they were nothing but vapor and dew."

—ANON.

The Wasps was a satire on the litigiousness of the Athenian people. Philocleon is represented as a victim of this passion. His son Bdelycleon tries to cure him. For this purpose he establishes a court of justice in his own house, and arraigns the house-dog on the charge of having stolen a Sicilian cheese. This play, which is marked by broad humor and buffoonery, served as a model to Racine for his comedy, "*Les Plaideurs*," superior in many respects to the work of the Greek dramatist.

The Peace has the same political purpose as the *Acharnians*. Trygæus, an Athenian citizen, rides to heaven on a beetle, that he may persuade the gods to put an end to the war. Zeus and the other divinities are from home, and Trygæus finds that War has thrown Peace into a well, and is engaged, with the aid of Tumult, in pounding the states of Greece in a mortar. The chief generals on either side serve as pestles. Trygæus engages the help of a band of rustics, rescues Peace from her uncomfortable position, and leads her in joy and triumph to Athens.

The Frogs has for its subject the decline of tragic art. All the great tragic poets are dead, and Bacchus, the god of tragedy, descends to the infernal regions, hoping to rescue some poet from the shades. Æschylus and Euripides contend for the privilege of returning to earth. An amusing dispute ensues. The poets declaim in characteristic style; a balance is brought, and they throw verses into the scales; but

the ponderous lines of Æschylus outweigh those of his rival. At length, Æschylus proposes that Euripides himself, with all his works, his wife and children, and a favorite servant, shall get into one scale, while he only asks to lay two verses against them in the other. Euripides is defeated by his own sophistry; and suffers a double discomfiture, as Æschylus returns to earth, and during his absence, Sophocles has been installed in the tragic throne below.

When Bacchus descends to the shades, the frogs of the Styx greet him with melodious croakings. The proper chorus, however, consists of the shades of those initiated in the Æleusinian mysteries; the choral odes are of surpassing beauty. We give a few verses from Frere's translation.

CHORUS. *Song.*

“ Raise the fiery torches high !
 Bacchus is approaching nigh,
 Like the planet of the morn,
 Breaking with the hoary dawn,
 On the dark solemnity—
 There they flash upon the sight ;
 All the plain is blazing bright,
 Flushed and overflown with light :
 Age has cast his years away,
 And the cares of many a day,
 Sporting to the lively lay—
 Mighty Bacchus ! march and lead
 (Torch in hand toward the mead)
 Thy devoted humble chorus,
 Mighty Bacchus—move before us ! ”

SEMICHORUS.

“ Keep silence—keep peace—and let all the profane
 From our holy solemnity duly refrain ;
 Whose souls unenlightened by taste, are obscure ;
 Whose poetical notions are dark and impure ;
 Whose theatrical conscience
 Is sullied by nonsense ;

Who never were trained by the mighty Cratinus
 In mystical orgies poetic and vinous ;
 Who delight in buffooning and jests out of season ;
 Who promote the designs of oppression and treason :
 Who foster sedition, and strife, and debate ;
 All traitors, in short, to the stage and the state."

SEMICHORUS.

" Now we go to dance and sing
 In the consecrated shades ;
 Round the secret holy ring,
 With the matrons and the maids.
 Thither I must haste to bring
 The mysterious early light ;
 Which must witness every rite
 Of the joyous happy night."

SEMICHORUS.

" Let us hasten—let us fly—
 Where the lovely meadows lie ;
 Where the living waters flow ;
 Where the roses bloom and blow.
 —Heirs of Immortality,
 Segregated, safe and pure,
 Easy, sorrowless, secure ;
 Since our earthly course is run,
 We behold a brighter sun.
 Holy lives—a holy vow—
 Such rewards await them now."

In the following lines from the same play, Aristophanes draws a comparison from the debased currency to which Athens had recourse in her necessity :

" Oftentimes have we reflected on a similar abuse,
 In the choice of men for office, and of coins for common
 use ;
 For your old and standard pieces, valued, and approved,
 and tried,
 Here among the Grecian nations, and in all the world be-
 side ;

Recognized in every realm for trusty stamp and pure assay,
 Are rejected and abandoned for the trash of yesterday ;
 For a vile, adulterate issue, drossy, counterfeit, and base,
 Which the traffic of the city passes current in their place !
 And the men that stood for office, noted for acknowledged
 worth,

And for manly deeds of honor, and for honorable birth ;
 Trained in exercise and art, in sacred dances and in song,
 All are ousted and supplanted by a base ignoble throng ;
 Paltry stamp and vulgar mettle raise them to command
 and place,

Brazen counterfeit pretenders, scoundrels of a scoundrel
 race ;

Whom the state in former ages scarce would have allowed
 to stand

At the sacrifice of outcasts, as the scape-goats of the land.
 —Time it is—and long has been, renouncing all your follies
 past,

To recur to sterling merit and intrinsic worth at last,
 —If we rise, we rise with honor ; if we fall, it must be so ! ”

The Birds is one of the most singular of the productions of this poet ; it seems a general satire upon the corruptions of the Athenian state, and of all human society. Two Athenians, disgusted with the state of Athens, visit Tereus, who had been changed into a hōōpōe, and propose to him a scheme for building a city, by means of which the birds may regain universal dominion, and become the rulers and benefactors of mankind.

The scheme is adopted in an assembly of birds, and a city is built called Nēphelococcýgia, or Cloud-cuckoo-town. Situated between earth and heaven, it cuts off all communication between gods and men, so that no odors even of sacrifices can reach Olympus. In this emergency the gods send an embassy ; but after many absurd disputes, in which a Thracian deity distinguishes himself by his bad Greek, the inhabitants of Olympus are obliged to take the best terms they

can get, and the sovereignty of the world is left to the birds.

The machinery of this play is extravagant as that of a fairy-tale; but many passages are distinguished by their wild and fantastic beauty.

PARABASIS FROM THE BIRDS.

“ Ye children of man, whose life is a span,
 Protracted with sorrow from day to day,
 Naked and featherless, feeble and querulous,
 Sickly, calamitous creatures of clay !
 Attend to the words of the sovereign birds
 (Immortal, illustrious, lords of the air),
 Who survey from on high, with a merciful eye,
 Your struggles of misery, labor, and care.
 Whence you may learn and clearly discern,
 Such truths as attract your inquisitive turn ;
 Which is busied of late with a mighty debate,
 A profound speculation about the creation,
 And organical life, and chaotical strife,
 With various notions of heavenly motions,
 And rivers and oceans, and valleys and mountains,
 And sources and fountains, and meteors on high,
 And stars in the sky. We propose by-and-bye
 (If you'll listen and hear) to make it all clear,
 And Prodicus, henceforth, shall pass for a dunce,
 When his doubts are explained and expounded at once.”
 —FRERE.

Plutus, the latest of the extant works of Aristophanes, furnishes an example of the Middle Comedy. It is an allegorical satire, the aim of which is to vindicate the conduct of Providence in the distribution of wealth. *Plutus*, having declared his intention of bestowing wealth only on the virtuous, is struck blind by Jupiter. In this state he is discovered by *Chremylus*, a virtuous old man, who compassionates his condition, and invites him to accompany him home. When they reach the house of *Chremylus*, *Poverty*, who had long been his friend and inmate, refuses to

yield to the strange guest, and gives the old man a lecture on political economy. Plutus is, nevertheless, installed, and being soon after restored to sight by Æsculapius, proceeds to distribute riches according to his original intention. Great calamities follow: the wicked are only rendered more desperate by the poverty to which they are reduced; the good become corrupted; the service of the gods is neglected, and Chremylus himself proposes to substitute the worship of Plutus for that of Jupiter.

CALLISTRATUS.

A comedian and a friend of Aristophanes who flourished in the fifth century before our era. The following verses celebrate the praise of Harmodius:

IN MYRTLE WREATHS.

- “ In myrtle wreaths my votive sword I'll cover,
 Like them of old, whose one immortal blow
 Struck off the galling fetters that hung over
 Their own bright land, and laid her tyrant low.
 Yes, loved Harmodius, thou 'rt undying,
 Still, midst the brave and free;
 In isles o'er ocean lying,
 Thy home shall ever be.
- “ In myrtle leaves my sword shall hide its lightning,
 Like his, the youth, whose ever-glorious blade
 Leaped forth like flame, the midnight banquet brightening;
 And in the dust a despot victim laid.
 Blest youths! how bright in Freedom's story
 Your wedded names shall be!
 A tyrant's death, your glory;
 Your meed, a nation free!”

HERODOTUS.

484-406 B. C.

This celebrated writer was a native of Halicarnassus. His family was noble, and his writings afford sufficient proof that he enjoyed the advantages of a liberal education. Little is known of the life of Herodotus beyond what may be gathered from the perusal of his works. Political events obliged him to leave his native city, and he resided for a time at Samos, where he became familiar with the Ionic dialect in which he wrote.

Herodotus was still young when he undertook that course of travel to which he devoted a large portion of his life. He studied everywhere the manners and customs of the people among whom he sojourned, and collected with patient care the material which he embodied later in his great work. It would appear, indeed, that he never left any country until he had exhausted every source of information which it contained. Where personal observation was possible, Herodotus investigated with untiring zeal. In relating what he received upon the testimony of others, he is careful to discriminate, mentioning various circumstances as doubtful, where he had reason to suspect the veracity of the narrator. While the historian is thus conscientious with regard to his statements, it must be acknowledged that he has an extraordinary appetite for the marvellous, and seldom doubts a story on account of its incredible nature.

Herodotus visited in his travels the greater part of the then known world, from Babylon and Susa in the

east, to the coasts of Magna Gracia (Southern Italy) in the west; and from the mouths of the Dnieper and the Danube to the cataracts of the Nile. This was a vast range in a time when there were few facilities for travel, and when robbers and pirates exercised everywhere a lucrative and hardly disreputable profession.

The historian visited Tyre and the Holy Land. Jerusalem he calls Cadytis; he mentions the defeat of Josias at Magédô, and the march of Phāraō-Nēchao on Jerusalem. Herodotus passed some time in Babylon, and explored the site of the ancient city of Nineveh. He describes Ecbátana, the capital of Media, and speaks of having seen the royal road which led from Ephesus to Susa, and which was traversed in three months and three days.

In Egypt, Herodotus spent many years, collecting the traditions of its history, and examining with care its most important cities and monuments. His descriptions of these form not the least interesting portion of his work. His account of the nomad tribes of Libya, and of the city of Carthage, are given on the testimony of others, but Thrace and Scythia are described with the fidelity of an eye-witness.

While the information of this historian is most exact with regard to the geography of Greece and the adjacent islands, he is often at fault when he has occasion to speak of Western Europe. He joined the Athenian colony which founded the city of Thurium, on the Gulf of Tarentum, but it does not appear that he travelled much in Italy. There is no mention made in his works of Italian States which played already an important part in Roman history, and it has been supposed that he was ignorant of the existence of Rome itself.

It would seem that Herodotus resided for a time at Athens, where he was treated with much honor. After a public recitation of that part of his history which refers to the Persian war, he was presented with the sum of ten talents (about \$12,000) from the public treasury. According to the most probable opinion, Herodotus returned to Thurium, where he died about 406 B.C.

While the Egyptian and Semitic races possessed authentic annals, dating from the most ancient times, the literature of the Greeks consisted exclusively of poetry. They had not even begun to chronicle and register contemporaneous events; the names of victors in the Olympic and other games, and some imperfect lists of the priestesses of the temple of Juno at Argos, constituted the only material prepared for the future historian. The reason of this difference is obvious. The Oriental nations had priestly hierarchies, and were governed by absolute sovereigns. Both institutions were favorable to the preservation of historical records. The history of the nation and the biography of the sovereign were one. It was his pride that nothing should be forgotten; that the story of his victories and achievements should be recorded to the latest posterity. To the priests was naturally committed the task of compiling, or at least of preserving, the national annals. Hence, without speaking of the Hebrew Scriptures, we find that long before the Homeric age, the hieroglyphics of Egypt, the cuneiform inscriptions of Assyria, and the sculptures of Nineveh contained already a faithful record of dynasties and empires, of the exploits of individual kings, and even of the customs and manners of different nations.

The Greeks had no such aids, and indeed their glory as one nation began with their struggle against the Persians. It was the first great enterprise in which the different states united, and which furnished a theme for history. The want of national annals was felt, and the annalist appeared in the person of Herodotus, named by his countrymen the "Father of History."

Herodotus was an ardent admirer of Homer, whom he has imitated in the general plan of his work. The events of which he wished to treat were too well known and too recent to admit of poetic embellishment; the history is, nevertheless, a complete epic; the triumph of Greece over Persia the subject; all other parts we may regard as digressions or episodes which diversify the whole. The history is divided into nine books, named from the nine Muses.

In the first place the author wishes to prove that there had existed, from the earliest times, a bitter hostility between Europe and Asia. The stories of Io, Europa, Medea, and Helen are examples of this in the mythical period. In historic times this enmity was manifested by Cræsus, King of Lydia. The history of this prince finds here an appropriate place. Herodotus, who is a charming story-teller, diversifies the record of grave events by incidents more or less authentic in the life of Cræsus: as the responses of oracles, the extraordinary fate of the young prince Adrastus, etc. When Cræsus, who seems to have offended the gods by a prosperity too great for mortal man, is about to undertake a war against the Persians, Herodotus puts the following speech into the mouth of a Lydian noble:

"O King," said he, "thou art about to march against men who have trousers of leather, and all the rest of their dress

of leather, and they feed not on what they would like, but on what they have; for their land is rough. Nay, more, they are unacquainted with wine, being water-drinkers, and they have no figs to eat, nor anything else that is good. If thou conquerest them, thou canst get nothing from them, for they have nothing to lose; if thou dost not, thou wilt lose all thine own good things. There will be no thrusting them back when once they have had a taste of what we enjoy; nay, I thank the gods that they do not put into the mind of the Persians to march against the Lydians."

The war is, nevertheless, undertaken, and the historian introduces an account of the birth and education of Cyrus, embellishing it with many extraordinary incidents. A description of Babylon enters into the history of this king. Herodotus speaks of the works without the city, which were intended to guard the country about the Euphrates from inundation, and attributes them to two queens, Semiramis, probably not the celebrated sovereign of that name, and Nītōcris. Of the latter he says:

"She built for herself a tomb above the most frequented gateway of the city, exactly over the gates, and engraved on it the following inscription: 'If any of the kings of Babylon who come after me shall be in need of money, let him open my tomb and take therefrom as much as he will; but unless he is in need, let him not open it, else it will be worse for him.' Now this tomb remained undisturbed until the kingdom fell to Darius. But he thought it absurd that this gateway should be made no use of—for it was not used, because one would have to pass under the dead body as he went out—and that when money was lying there idle, and calling out for some one to take it, he should not lay his hand on it. So he opened the tomb, and found no money at all, but only the dead body, and these words written: 'If thou wert not the greediest of men, and shameless in thy greed, thou wouldst not have disturbed the resting-place of the dead.'"

Herodotus mentions many things concerning the habits and customs of the Persians, not the least curi-

ous being the manner in which they debated on public affairs. He says:

“ They are much given to wine, and discuss every subject of importance twice; first, when they are drunk, and again, when they are sober.”

Tacitus attributes the same custom to the Germans. The first Book, *Clio*, concludes with an account of the rising power of Athens.

Euterpe, the second book, is the most interesting to a modern reader. It contains graphic descriptions of the wonders of Egypt: the Pyramids, Memphis, Thebes of the hundred gates, etc. The historian mentions a singular law attributed to King Amadis, by which every man was obliged to appear once a year before the governor of his district, and prove, under pain of death, that he was gaining an honest livelihood.

This book is, like the rest, interspersed with traditional stories. That of the treasury of King Rhampsinitus reads as if taken from the Arabian Nights. Those who hold nursery legends in affectionate remembrance may be pleased to find the original Cinderella in the pages of the Greek historian. Herodotus speaks of Rhodopis, a Greek slave, who was married to one of the Egyptian kings. Strabo gives the following account of her elevation. The maiden was bathing in a fountain, when an eagle carried off one of her sandals, and flying to the royal palace, dropped his trophy at the foot of the throne. The king was struck by the circumstance, and by the elegance of the tiny sandal. Proclamation was made for the wearer, who was happily discovered, and became, as we have seen, the wife of Psammenitus.

We find in Herodotus a full account of the supersti-

tion of the Egyptians and their worship of beasts and reptiles ; also many circumstances which seem to show that their morality corresponded only too well with their religious belief.

The historian relates many things on the testimony of adventurous travellers, some of whom had probably penetrated as far as the city of Timbúctoo, and had followed the course of the Niger for a considerable distance. Their story of the nation of pygmies, and of the wars which these carried on with the large cranes of the country, is probably an exaggerated account of some dwarfish African tribe.

Thalia contains the history of Cambyzes and his Egyptian conquest. Connected with this, Herodotus relates a pathetic story : Cambyzes, wishing, as he says, to try the spirit of Psammenitus, the conquered king, had him placed and some captive Egyptian nobles, at one of the gates of Memphis. There the king saw his daughter and a train of noble maidens pass, habited as slaves, and bearing pitchers on their heads to draw water from a public fountain. The nobles, seeing their children thus degraded, lamented loudly, but Psammenitus bowed his head, and was silent. Then the son of the Egyptian king was led by with two thousand noble youths. They had ropes around their necks, and were about to suffer death as a reprisal for the murder of some Persians by the people of Memphis. At this terrible sight the nobles renewed their lamentations and outcries, but Psammenitus behaved as before. A little after, seeing an aged noble, his familiar friend, asking alms of the soldiers, the king burst into tears and gave way to the most violent expressions of grief. Cambyzes, surprised at this, demanded why he wept for his friend

rather than for his daughter or his son. Psammenitus replied : “ O, son of Cyrus ! mine own misfortunes were too great for tears.”

The fourth book, *Melpomene*, contains the history of the expedition of Darius against the Scythians. In describing the peculiarities of this people, Herodotus mentions that a certain tribe, the Neuri, were said to transform themselves periodically into wolves. This ancient superstition survived in the *wēhr-wolf* of the Germans, and the French *Loup-garou*. The historian was assured that there were people in the extreme north who slept six months of the year ; probably a misunderstood report of the long night of the Arctic winter.

Herodotus gives an account of the circumnavigation of Africa by a Phœnician fleet sent out by Pharaoh-Nechao. They were instructed to sail down the Red Sea and to return to Egypt by the Pillars of Hercules (Straits of Gibraltar) ; this they effected in three years, having stopped to sow grain, and being obliged to wait for the harvest. The navigators declared that, sailing around Libya, they had the sun on their right hand. This circumstance, which is to us a proof that these bold sailors had really explored the seas south of the equator, is considered by Herodotus sufficient to discredit their entire narrative.

In the fifth book we have an account of the progress of the Grecian States. It closes with the banishment of Hippias.

The remaining books are devoted to the history of the Persian war. The four battles of Marathon, Thermopylæ, Salamis, and Plataea form the chief incidents of as many books. Herodotus thus describes the conduct of the heroic band of Spartans at Ther-

mopylæ when they learned that their position had been betrayed :

“ First, the soothsayer Megistias, as he inspected the sacrifices, warned them of the death which awaited them with the morrow’s dawn. Then came some deserters, who told them of the march of the Persians around the hill. All this was while it was still night. Then, when the day had broken, their scouts came running down from the heights with the same news. Thereupon the Greeks took counsel, and their opinions were divided ; for some would not hear of quitting their posts, while others advised to do so. Then they parted asunder, and some went off and dispersed, going to their own cities, and some prepared to remain there with Leonidas. It is even said that Leonidas himself sent them away, anxious that they should not be slain ; but for himself, and the Spartans who were there, it was not seemly, he said, for them to leave a post which they had once undertaken to keep.”

We take the following extract from Rawlinson’s translation :

ARTABANUS ENDEAVORS TO DISSUADE XERXES FROM
THE EXPEDITION AGAINST GREECE.

“ The other Persians were silent, for all feared to raise their voice against the plan proposed to them. But Artabanus, the son of Hystaspes, and uncle of Xerxes, trusting to his relationship, was bold to speak : ‘ O king,’ he said, ‘ it is impossible, if no more than one opinion is uttered, to make choice of the best : a man is forced then to follow whatever advice may have been given him ; but if opposite speeches are delivered, then choice can be exercised. In like manner pure gold is not recognized by itself ; but when we test it along with baser ore, we perceive which is the better. I counselled thy father, Darius, who was my own brother, not to attack the Scyths, a race of people who had no town in their whole land. He thought, however, to subdue those wandering tribes, and would not listen to me, but marched an army against them, and ere he returned home lost many of his bravest warriors. Thou art about, O king, to attack a people far superior to the Scyths, a people distinguished above others both by land and sea. ’Tis fit, therefore, that I should tell thee what danger thou incurrst thereby. Thou

sayest that thou wilt bridge the Hellespont, and lead thy troops through Europe against Greece. Now suppose some disaster befall thee by land or sea, or by both. It may be even so, for the men are reputed valiant. Indeed, one may measure their prowess from what they have already done; for when Dātis and Artaphérnēs led their huge army against Attica, the Athenians singly defeated them. But grant they are not successful on both elements. Still, if they man their ships, and, defeating us by sea, sail to the Hellespont, and there destroy our bridge—that, sire, were a fearful hazard. And here 'tis not by my own mother-wit alone that I conjecture what will happen, but I remember how narrowly we escaped disaster once, when thy father, after throwing bridges over the Thracian Bosphorus and the Ister, marched against the Scythians, and they tried every sort of prayer to induce the Ionians, who had charge of the bridge over the Ister, to break the passage. On that day, if Histiaëus, the King of Miletus, had sided with the other princes, and not set himself to oppose their views, the empire of the Persians would have come to naught. Surely a dreadful thing is this even to hear said, that the king's fortune depended wholly on one man.

“Think then no more of incurring so great a danger when no need presses, but follow the advice I tender. Break up this meeting, and when thou hast well considered the matter with thyself, and settled what thou wilt do, declare to us thy resolve. I know not of aught in the world that so profits a man as taking good counsel with himself; for even if things fall out against one's hopes, still one has counselled well, though fortune has made the counsel of no effect; whereas if a man counsels ill and luck follows, he has gotten a windfall, but his counsel is none the less silly. Seest thou how God with his lightning smites alway the bigger animals, and will not suffer them to wax insolent, while those of a lesser bulk chafe him not? How likewise his bolts fall ever on the highest houses and the tallest trees? So plainly does He love to bring down everything that exalts itself. Thus oftentimes a mighty host is discomfited by a few men, when God in his jealousy sends fear or storm from heaven, and they perish in a way unworthy of them. For God allows no one to have high thoughts but Himself. Again, hurry always brings about disasters, from which huge sufferings are wont to arise; but in delay lie many advantages, not apparent (it

may be) at first sight, but such as in course of time are seen of all. Such, then, is my counsel to thee, O king.

“ ‘And thou, Mardonius, son of Gobryas, forbear to speak foolishly concerning the Greeks, who are men that ought not to be lightly esteemed by us. For while thou revilest the Greeks, thou dost encourage the king to lead his own troops against them ; and this, as it seems to me, is what thou art specially striving to accomplish. Heaven send thou succeed not to thy wish ! For slander is of all evils the most terrible. In it two men do wrong, and one man has wrong done to him. The slanderer does wrong, forasmuch as he abuses a man behind his back ; and the hearer, forasmuch as he believes what he has not searched into thoroughly. The man slandered in his absence suffers wrong at the hands of both ; for one brings against him a false charge, and the other thinks him an evil-doer. If, however, it must needs be that we go to war with this people, at least allow the king to abide at home in Persia. Then let thee and me both stake our children on the issue, and do thou choose out thy men, and taking with thee whatever number of troops thou likest, lead forth our armies to battle. If things go well for the king, as thou sayest they will, let me and my children be put to death ; but if they fall out as I prophesy, let thy children suffer, and thou too, if thou shalt come back alive. But shouldst thou refuse this wager, and still resolve to march an army against Greece, sure I am that some of those whom thou leavest behind thee here will one day receive the sad tidings that Mardonius has brought a great disaster upon the Persian people, and lies a prey to dogs and birds somewhere in the land of the Athenians, or else in that of the Lacedæmonians ; unless, indeed, thou shalt have perished sooner by the way, experiencing in thy own person the might of those men on whom thou wouldst fain induce the king to make war.’ ”

THUCYDIDES.

ABOUT 471-401 B.C.

Thucydides was the son of Ōlorus, an Athenian citizen. Of his youth and early manhood we know little or nothing, if we except the assertion made by

several writers that he was instructed in elocution by the orator *Ἄντιφον*.

In the year 424 B.C., Thucydides, who commanded the Athenian fleet, was sent to the relief of Amphipolis, then besieged by the Spartans. He arrived too late, entering the mouth of the *Στῆρυμον* a few hours after the city had surrendered. The demagogue *Κλέων* took advantage of this circumstance to excite the Athenians against the commander, and Thucydides anticipated their sentence by going into voluntary exile.

During his banishment, a period of twenty years, Thucydides was probably occupied in watching the current of events, recording each incident as it occurred, and arranging the whole into a connected narrative. Of the return of the historian to his native city, and of the time and manner of his death, we have only conflicting accounts. According to some, he was assassinated, while others state that he died peacefully at *Κόϊε*, near Athens. The date of this event is variously given between the years 401 and 391 B.C.

Thucydides intended to give a complete history of the Peloponnesian war, but, from some cause which is not explained, the narrative closes abruptly in the middle of the twenty-first year. The eighth and last book is distinguished by the absence of speeches, and it is evident that the historian did not bestow the same care upon this as on the preceding portion of his great work.

The first book, which contains a brief summary of the early history of Greece, is in itself of great importance. It is impossible to speak too highly of the manner in which this philosophical historian discusses the popular legends and traditions of his country.

The story of Harmodius and Aristogiton is the subject of a masterly criticism, which we would gladly quote if space permitted. A narrative of contemporary events is usually open to serious objections, as the historian is liable to be influenced by his own prejudices or those of his party. The high-minded impartiality of Thucydides, and his love of truth, rendered his work exceptional in this respect. He has political views which he expresses freely, but as a historian he stands aloof from all party issues, and his authority is therefore invaluable.

Thucydides gives a variety to his work by the speeches which he attributes to the different historical personages. There is no doubt but that he took occasion to convey in this manner his own political views, as well as those of the personages engaged; and the speeches are of importance as conveying a just idea of the politics of the day. They present also a lively picture of the Athenian character, with all its strange inconsistency. The orations themselves are fitted rather for calm study than for actual delivery.

Thucydides possessed an imaginative power, which, had he cared to use it, might have given interest to the driest narrative. His exactness of detail produces sometimes an effect equal to any poetic description. We might name as illustrations, his account of the plague of Athens, the history of the siege of Plataea, and of the disastrous Sicilian expedition. When we compare this historian with Herodotus, we must acknowledge that although his mind is of a more thoughtful and philosophic cast, and his work is more truly a history in the highest sense of the term, his reputation can in no manner detract from the fame of the great father of history. Herodotus had a field

vast and untrodden, and at each step he found something new in the wonders of art and nature, or in the historic legends of the Oriental world. His mind, in which true genius was united with a child-like truthfulness and simplicity of character, was peculiarly fitted for the task which he undertook. His writings are altogether objective; self is forgotten, and he thinks only of telling his story simply and clearly as he knows and feels it. Hence the unfailing interest of his narrative.

Thucydides, on the other hand, is subjective; he gives everywhere his own sentiments and feelings. It is but just to acknowledge that he was fitted to form and lead public opinion, and the judgments which he passes on men and events prove that he was far in advance of the most enlightened among his contemporaries.

XENOPHON.

445-355 B.C.

Xenophon was a disciple of Socrates, and, after Plato, the brightest ornament of the Socratic school. His turn of mind was, nevertheless, eminently practical; and there is so little that is metaphysical in his writings that we must consider him as a historian and a commander rather than a philosopher. Xenophon was the son of Gryllus, a native Athenian; the exact date of his birth cannot be determined—that mentioned above seems the most probable. Diogenes, his biographer, gives the following account of his introduction into the school of Socrates: The philosopher chanced to meet Xenophon, then “a beautiful and modest boy,” in a narrow way. Putting his stick

across so as to bar the passage, Socrates asked him where provisions could be bought. Xenophon having named some public market, he next inquired where men were taught to be noble and good. The youth hesitating what to answer, Socrates said : " Follow me and learn."

Xenophon became a devoted disciple of the great philosopher, not only applying to his formal lectures and instructions, but taking notes of his most familiar conversations. These he afterwards gave to the world under the title of "*Memorabilia*."

In the year 441 B.C., Xenophon was persuaded to enter the service of the younger Cyrus. This prince had determined to dethrone his brother Artaxerxes Memnon, but this design was concealed from the Greek troops whom he enlisted, so that they learned the truth when it was too late to withdraw from the rash enterprise. Cyrus met the army of the Persian king at Cunaxa. He fell in the engagement, and his Oriental troops fled in the greatest disorder. The Greeks under Clearchus had won a decided but fruitless victory in that part of the field where they led the attack, and they were still pursuing the enemy when news was received of the death of Cyrus. They resolved to return without delay to their own country, and the Persians, who were much impressed by their valor, did not attempt to oppose them openly in the field. Tissaphernes, an officer of Artaxerxes, had recourse to treachery. Clearchus and the other generals, with a number of the principal officers, were invited to a conference, and, by his orders, basely murdered. The Greeks, still firm in their resolution of returning to Europe, chose five officers to replace the generals whom they had lost. Xenophon was of

the number, and the judgment and intrepidity which he displayed inspired such confidence that the entire control of the expedition soon fell into his hands.

We cannot speak, however briefly, of the dangers bravely encountered, the hardships patiently endured, in this famous Retreat of the Ten Thousand. Encouraged by Xenophon, who was the life and soul of the little army, they surmounted every difficulty, until, at the end of fifteen months, they stood upon the heights of Mount Thesbes, and beheld the broad Euxine rolling at their feet. The weary Greeks, seeing in its blue waters a vision of their homes, burst forth into transports of joy. They wept and embraced one another, while the shout *Thalatta! Thalatta!* the sea! the sea! rose and swelled, as more and more reached the summit of the mount. Xenophon, who was in the rear, feared that the army had been surprised, and spurred his horse forward, until distinguishing the joyful cry, he partook of the general enthusiasm. Two days later they reached the friendly Greek city of *Trapēzus* (Trebizond).

Here closes the most interesting portion of the *Anabasis*, the remaining events possessing little to interest a modern reader. Xenophon did not return to Athens, a sentence of banishment having been pronounced against him while he was still in Asia. His attachment to the interests of Sparta, and his connection with Socrates, were the principal causes of this decree. The Spartans were not ungrateful: they granted Xenophon an estate at Scillus, near Olympia, where he was joined by his wife and children. Here he enjoyed an uninterrupted course of prosperity and peaceful enjoyment, such as rarely falls to the lot of men who have been engaged in the stirring events of

public life. His occupations were, as Diogenes informs us, hunting, entertaining his friends, and writing his histories. Xenophon was passionately fond of horses, and the periodical recurrence of the Olympic games must have formed agreeable episodes in his otherwise tranquil life.

The decree of banishment was recalled, and Gryllus and Diodorus, the sons of Xenophon, fought among the Athenian knights at Mantinea, where the former was slain. It is said that Xenophon was offering sacrifice when news was brought that his son had fallen. He immediately removed the garland from his head; but when the messenger added that he died nobly, he replaced it and would not weep, saying: "I knew that my son was mortal." This is the last anecdote related of this illustrious man, but we know that he lived long after, dying, it is believed, in the ninetieth year of his age.

The most important of the works of Xenophon are the *Anábasis*, the *Memorabilia* of Socrates, and the *Cyropædia*. In the first of these we have, with a vast amount of information, a graphic story of varied adventure. It is distinguished, as are all the writings of Xenophon, by the purity and elegance of language, in which he is not surpassed by any Grecian writer. Apart from this, Xenophon does not seem to have aimed at beauty of style. He studied only to express what he had to say simply and clearly, while his high culture and natural taste rendered his expressions pleasing and refined. Hence his writings, with their every-day sentences, are considered to form a truer model of classic Greek prose than the studied grandeur of Thucydides, or the half-poetical beauty of Plato. As an instance of the homely detail which imparts so

much life and interest to the story of the Retreat, we give the following. It will illustrate also the democratic spirit of the Greek army, and the freedom with which they called their generals to account for their conduct :

“Some also brought accusations against Xenophon, alleging that they had been beaten by him, and charging him with having behaved insolently. On this, Xenophon stood up, and called on him who had spoken first, to say where he had been beaten. He answered, ‘Where we were perishing with cold, and when the snow was deepest.’ Xenophon rejoined, ‘Come, come ! in such severe weather as you mention, when provisions had failed, and we had not wine so much as to smell to—when many were exhausted with fatigue, and the enemy were close behind—if at such a time I behaved insolently, I acknowledge that I must be more vicious than an ass, which, they say, is too vicious to feel being tired. Tell us, however, why you were beaten. Did I ask you for anything, and beat you when you did not give it to me ? Did I ask anything back from you ? Was I quarrelling about a love-affair ? Did I maltreat you in my cups ?’ As the man said there was nothing of this kind, Xenophon asked him whether he was one of the heavy-armed troops ? He answered ‘No ;’ whether he was a targeteer ? He said he was not that either, but a free man, who had been sent to drive a mule by his comrades. On this Xenophon recognized him and asked him, ‘What ! are you the man who was conveying the sick person ?’ ‘Ay ! by Jupiter, I am,’ said he, ‘for you compelled me to do it, and you scattered about the baggage of my comrades.’ ‘The scattering,’ rejoined Xenophon, ‘was something in this way : I distributed it to others to carry, and ordered them to bring it to me again ; and having got it back, I restored it all safe to you as soon as you had produced the man that I gave you in charge. But hear, all of you,’ he continued, ‘in what way the affair happened, for it is worth listening to. A man was being left behind because he could march no farther. I knew nothing of him, except that he was one of us, and I compelled you, sir, to bring him, that he might not perish ; for, if I mistake not, the enemy was pressing upon us.’ This the complainant acknowledged. ‘Well, then,

said Xenophon, 'after I had sent you on, did I not catch you, as I came up with the rear-guard, digging a trench to bury the man, when I stopped and commended you? But while we were standing by, the man drew up his leg, and those who were there called out that he was alive. And you said: "He may be as much alive as he likes, for I sha'n't carry him." On this I struck you, it is quite true, for you seemed to me to have been aware that the man was alive.' 'Well, then,' exclaimed the other, 'did he die any the less after I had rendered him up to you?' 'Why, we shall all die,' said Xenophon, 'but is that any reason that we should be buried alive?' Hereupon all the assembly cried out that Xenophon had not beaten the fellow half enough."

The *Cyropædia*, or Education of Cyrus, refers to the great founder of the Persian Empire, not to the prince under whom Xenophon had served. It is a historical romance in which the author has set forth his own political opinions, and has endeavored at the same time to draw the picture of a perfect ruler. Xenophon did not possess the imaginative power which might have relieved the dryness of such a work, and it has been remarked that the *Cyropædia* is far less interesting than the account of Cyrus given by Herodotus, who simply relates the historical details which he had collected. In the *Memorabilia* of Socrates, which consists of four books, Xenophon describes the actual life of this great philosopher and defends his memory from the charges brought against him. Xenophon is plain and matter-of-fact, and there is in the *Memorabilia* a truthfulness which makes of Socrates a historic reality, while the *idealistic* and dramatic pictures given by Plato would sometimes lead us to fear that this great master was, at it were, a philosophic myth, the creation of his own genius.

In the *Symposium*, or Banquet of the Philosophers, we have an imaginary dialogue between Socrates and

a party of his friends who sup at the house of Cállias, a wealthy Athenian.

The Hellenicæ contains the history of Greece from the time of Thucydides to the battle of Mantinea.

The remaining works of Xenophon consist of treatises on domestic economy, field sports, the treatment of horses, training of dogs to hunt, etc.

We give the following extract from the Symposium, or Banquet of the Philosophers, as an example of the gay and humorous banter in which Socrates was wont to indulge :

“ ‘Now it is your turn, Critobúlus,’ continued Socrates ; ‘tell us, then, if you please, upon what you value yourself most?’ ‘On beauty,’ replied he. ‘But, will you say,’ questioned Socrates, ‘that yours is such as will help to make us better?’ ‘Socrates,’ answered Critobulus, ‘I understand you ; but if I do not make that out anon, then blame me. What says Antisthenes—upon what does he value himself?’

ANTISTHENES.—‘I think I can value myself upon nothing in this world equal to the privilege of being rich.’

He had scarce done speaking, when Hermógenes took him up, and asked him how much he was worth? ‘Faith, not one half-penny,’ said Antisthenes.

HERMOGENES.—‘But you have a good estate in land?’

ANT.—‘I may, perhaps, have just as much as may afford dust for Autólicus, the next time he has a mind to wrestle.’

SOC.—‘Carmides, will you, in few words, acquaint us with what it is you value yourself most upon?’

CAR.—‘Poverty.’

SOC.—‘Very well ; you have made an excellent choice ; it is indeed of an admirable nature ; nobody will be your rival ; you may preserve it without care, and even negligence is its security. These are not small reasons, you see.’

Then Lŷcon, pointing to Philip (a buffoon), ‘Well, what say you? You, I suppose, value yourself upon making men laugh?’

‘Yes, certainly,’ said Philip ; ‘and have I not more reason to be proud of myself for this, than that fine spark, Callípidēs, who is so fond, as you know, of making his audience weep, when he recites his verses in the theatre?’

'But, Lycon,' said Antisthenes, 'let us know upon what you value yourself the most ; what gives you greatest content ?'

'You know very well,' answered he, 'that what I esteem the most, and what gives me the greatest pleasure, it is to be the father of such a son as Autolicus.'

'And for your son,' said some of the company, 'he, no question, values himself most upon carrying the prize the other day at the Olympic games ?'

'Not so, I assure you,' said Autolicus, blushing. And then the whole company turning their eyes with pleasure towards him, one of them asked him : 'What then, Autolicus, do you value yourself most upon ?' 'It is,' replied he, 'that I am the son of such a father.'

Then Critobulus began : 'I am now,' said he, 'to give my reasons why I value myself so much upon my beauty. If I am not handsome (and I know very well what I think of the matter), you ought all of you to be accounted impostors ; for, without being obliged to it upon oath, when you were asked what was your opinion of me, you all swore I was handsome, and I thought myself obliged to believe you, being men of honor that scorned a lie.'

'Why, Critobulus, do you give yourself this air of vanity,' said Socrates, 'as if you were handsomer than me ?'

'Doubtless,' replied Critobulus, 'if I have not the advantage of you in beauty, I must be uglier than the Silēni, as they are painted by the poets.'

Now, Socrates had some resemblance to those figures.

SOC.—'But how comes it, then, that things so very different as these should yet all of them be handsome ?'

CRIT.—'Because they are well made, either by art or nature, for the purpose they are employed in.'

SOC.—'Do you know the use of eyes ?'

CRIT.—'To see.'

SOC.—'Well ! it is for that very reason mine are handsomer than yours.'

CRIT.—'Your reason ?'

SOC.—'Yours see only in a direct line ; but, as for mine, I can look not only directly forward, as you, but sideways too, they being seated on a kind of ridge on my face, and staring out.'

CRIT.—'At that rate, a crab has the advantage of all other animals in the matter of eyes.'

Soc.—‘Certainly ; for theirs are incomparably more solid, and better situated than any other creature’s.’

CRIT.—‘Be it so as to eyes ; but as to your nose, would you make me believe that yours is better shaped than mine?’

Soc.—‘There is no room for doubt, if it be granted that God made the nose for the sense of smelling ; for your nostrils are turned downward, but mine are wide and turned up towards heaven, to receive smells that come from every part, whether from above or below.’

CRIT.—‘What ! is a short flat nose, then, more beautiful than another?’

Soc.—‘Certainly ; because being such, it never hinders the sight of both eyes at once ; whereas a high nose parts the eyes so much by its rising, that it hinders their seeing both in a direct line.’

CRIT.—‘As to your mouth, I grant it to you ; for if God has given us a mouth to eat with, it is certain yours will receive as much at once as mine at thrice.’

Soc.—‘And lastly, I must excel you in beauty for this reason : the Naiades, notwithstanding they are sea-goddesses, are said to have brought forth the Sileni ; and surely, I am much more like them than you can pretend to be. What say you to that?’

CRIT.—‘It is impossible to hold a dispute with you, Socrates ; and, therefore, let us determine this point by balloting ; but, pray let it be done in the dark, lest Antisthenes’ riches and your eloquence corrupt the judges.’

The balloting-box was brought ; but Socrates called at the same time for a flambeau to be held before Critobulus, that the voters might not be surprised in their judgment.”*

As may be imagined, Critobulus received the unanimous vote of the company, and the result was announced amid much merriment.

ORATORS.

Under this head we can only notice briefly those among the Greeks whose speeches have come down to our times.

ANTIPHON.

B. C. 479-411.

Antiphon has been considered the inventor of rhetoric, as he was the first to apply this art to judicial pleading and to affairs treated in popular assemblies. Of fifteen orations yet extant, twelve are rhetorical exercises composed for the instruction of his disciples ; three were written for clients. In the Athenian courts, parties were not represented by counsel, and it was usual for those who distrusted their own abilities to employ a skilful rhetorician to compose speeches, which they committed to memory and delivered. Antiphon is said to have been the first who received money for this service.

When the power of the Four Hundred was overthrown at Athens, Antiphon, who had been a member of this body, was accused of treason. On this occasion he spoke in public for the first and last time, but his eloquence availed nothing ; he was condemned to death, his property was confiscated, and his children were declared infamous.

Antiphon was preceptor of Thucydides, and his instructions contributed without doubt to forming the plain, forcible style for which that historian is distinguished.

⁵¹
 ANDOCIDES.
BORN B. C. 467.

Andocides has left four orations, valued chiefly for the political and historical information which they contain. His life was marked by striking vicissitudes, and he died in exile.

LYSIAS.

B.C. 458-378.

This orator, a native of Syracuse, was naturalized at Athens. He was engaged more or less in all the political troubles of the day, but after suffering confiscation, imprisonment, and exile, he was permitted to return to Athens, where he passed the latter years of his life.

Of two hundred and thirty orations composed by Lysias, forty-four are extant. They were written for clients, and possess some value as throwing light on the financial system of the Athenians. Lysias was much admired by the ancients; his language is purely Attic; he is ornate without loss of strength, and he combines dignity with the most charming simplicity. This last characteristic he probably derived from a study of the works of Herodotus, and from his intercourse with that great historian.

 ISOCRATES.
B.C. 436-337.

Isocrates was the founder of a famous school of rhetoric, and numbered among his pupils Demosthenes and many other illustrious men. This orator was opposed to the subtleties of the sophists, and his refined taste enabled him to judge of the exact degree to which ornament may be employed without detracting from the essential requisites of clearness and strength.

The Greek orators were remarkable for the patient care with which they polished and revised their com-

positions. Isocrates carried this farther than any other, and it is said that he gave ten years to the perfecting of one oration.

Bodily weakness, together with a quiet and retiring disposition, unfitted this orator for the stormy scenes of public life, and he was personally exempt from the calamities of his time. He was, nevertheless, an ardent patriot, and when the battle of Chæronea destroyed the hopes of Athens, his grief was such that he put an end to his own life, dying in the ninety-ninth year of his age.

ISÆUS.

A pupil of Isocrates, was one of the preceptors of Demosthenes. He has left eleven orations, all on causes connected with the laws of inheritance. They throw light on the working of Athenian jurisprudence, but are otherwise devoid of interest.

DEMOSTHENES.

B. C. 385-322.

The name of this illustrious man belongs rather to history than to literature, and it will not be necessary to do more than notice briefly the nature of his eloquence, and the manner in which he employed this noble gift in the service of his country.

Demosthenes was an Athenian, the son of a wealthy sword-cutler of the same name. He was defrauded by his guardians of the greater portion of his inheritance, and being thus thrown upon the resources of his intellect, devoted himself to the study of oratory.

The physical difficulties with which he had to con-

tend, and the perseverance by which he overcame every obstacle, are familiar to all. After having distinguished himself on several less important occasions, Demosthenes employed his entire energies in resisting the aggressive policy of Philip of Macedon. From this time he must be regarded, not simply as an orator, but as an enlightened statesman and a fearless patriot. He was obliged not merely to denounce the ambition of Philip; he had the more difficult task of rousing the expiring patriotism of the Athenians, telling them the boldest truths, and exposing himself by this frankness to peril as great as he would have encountered upon the field of battle.

In the years 344–342 B.C. Demosthenes delivered the famous orations known as *Philippics*, in which he denounced, with all the power of the most fiery eloquence, the craft and ambition of the King of Macedon, exhorting the states of Greece to a united effort, such as had once rolled back the tide of eastern conquest. The Greeks were no longer the men who had fought at Marathon; the warnings of the orator were disregarded, and Philip's power was firmly established. When Demosthenes was chosen to pronounce the funeral oration over those who fell on the fatal field of Chæronea, he must have felt that he was assisting also at the obsequies of his country's freedom.

Through all this disastrous time Æschines was the rival of Demosthenes, and the devoted partisan of Philip. He succeeded in thwarting the patriotic efforts of the great orator; but when he instituted a prosecution, aimed indirectly against him, he was defeated and was forced to leave Athens.

Some years later Demosthenes was accused of receiving bribes, and the Macedonian party was suffi-

ciently strong to procure his condemnation. He escaped, however, and remained in exile until the death of Alexander. This event raised the hopes of Greece, and Demosthenes found once more a theme for his burning eloquence. The states feared, however, to unite against their oppressors; Antipater marched upon Athens, and the great orator, seeing his last hope deceived, fled to the temple of Neptune, at Calauria, and there committed suicide by poison.

It is generally admitted that Demosthenes has never been surpassed in impressiveness, force, and conciseness of expression. These excellencies cannot be attributed altogether to natural genius, nor to the care and study with which he cultivated his high gifts; much was undoubtedly due to the honest truthfulness of his character, and to the dignity which is imparted by the consciousness of a high and noble purpose.

ÆSCHINES.

389-324.

This orator was intellectually a fit antagonist of Demosthenes, and in natural gifts his superior. Of the unworthy part which he took in the affairs of Athens we have already spoken. Æschines died at Samos; of his numerous orations there are but three extant.

Our limits will not permit any farther notice of the Greek orators. Hyperides, Demades, Lysurgus, and Dinarchus attained much distinction. They belonged to nearly the same period, and the decline of oratory was the natural consequence of the loss of Grecian independence.

PLATO. (*broad*)

430 B. C.

This philosopher was born at Ægina, in Attica, in the year which was rendered memorable by the death of Pericles. He was of an illustrious family, his mother being descended from Solon, while his father counted among his ancestors Codrus, the hero-king of Attica.

Little is known of the early years of Plato beyond the fact that he received the mental and physical culture usually given to the higher class of Athenian youth. This included the teaching of the grammar school, elocution, music, mathematics, and the exercises of the palæstra. While Plato was distinguished at an early age by his intellectual acquirements, he was also foremost in every manly exercise, and on more than one occasion bore off prizes at the Isthmian games. The name Plato was given to him, according to some, on account of the breadth of his intellectual forehead, according to others, from the broad shoulders which gave evidence of a physical power almost equally remarkable. His real name was Aristocles.

Of the part which Plato took in the troubles of his country we can only conjecture. When the knights hung up their bridles in the Acropolis, and went to serve as simple marines on board the Athenian fleet, it seems probable that Plato was among the number. In this case he served in the squadron which relieved Mitylene, and witnessed the victory gained soon after at Arginusæ. There is no mention made of him during any of the subsequent events.

One calamity followed fast upon another, from the destruction of the fleet at *Ægos-potamos*, to the day when, after the long agony of defeat and famine, Athens surrendered to the Spartans ;—her walls were demolished ; and the ungenerous conqueror carried on the work of destruction to the sound of triumphal music.

The sympathies of Plato were for a time in favor of the body who were known later as the Thirty Tyrants. Critias, the leading spirit among them, was uncle to the young philosopher, and the temporary adhesion of the latter was probably due to his influence. When the Thirty showed their true character, and inaugurated a reign of terror in the city, Plato broke off all connection with them, and retired from public life in disgust.

During the twelve years which followed these events, Plato was the intimate companion and disciple of the great Socrates. That he had previously attended his lectures appears probable from an anecdote which is related in this connection. Socrates dreamed that a young swan, flying towards him, nestled in his bosom, then, fully fledged, spread its wings and soared towards heaven, pouring forth a flood of melodious song. The following morning Ariston brought his young son to the philosopher, and Socrates, looking upon him, felt that his dream was fulfilled.

After the death of Socrates, Plato retired for a time to *Megara*, where he resided with his friend Euclid. He then set out upon those travels of which ancient writers have left such contradictory accounts. His visit to Sicily, of which we have more reliable evidence, took place about the year 387 B.C. Plato desired to witness the phenomena attendant upon the

eruption of Mt. Etna. On his way he passed some time at Tarentum with Archytas, a philosopher of the Pythagorean school. Here he met Dion, brother-in-law of Dionysius, Tyrant of Syracuse. The young man was captivated by the gracious manners, the eloquence, and the noble sentiments of Plato, and he dared to hope that Dionysius might be won to establish in Syracuse a model government, such as the philosopher described later in his "Republic."

Plato shared the enthusiasm of his new friend, but they were soon to learn that in political affairs the most perfect theories are not those most easily reduced to practice, and that frankness and plain speaking are more acceptable in schools of philosophy than in the courts of kings. Arrived at Syracuse, Plato was well received, and began without delay to inculcate the principles of virtue and philosophy. When he enlarged upon the happiness of the virtuous and the misery of the wicked, the courtiers were charmed by his eloquence; but the tyrant, who took every new illustration as a personal insult, ordered that Plato should be taken forthwith to the market-place, and there sold to the highest bidder, that so he might test the truth of his own maxims, and know if the virtuous man could be happy in chains. The philosopher was redeemed by his friends for twenty minæ, and returned soon after to Athens.

Justly disgusted with politics, Plato retired to a country house which he possessed at Colonus. Here, and in the olive groves of the Academy, he gave gratuitous instructions, attracting around him all that was best and noblest among the Athenian youth. Unlike the followers of Socrates, the disciples of Plato are described as being distinguished by their rich

and even foppish attire. This reproach was probably unjust, and there was certainly nothing frivolous in the doctrine or discourse of the great master. Those who enjoyed his intimacy speak with enthusiasm of his commanding form, the persuasive grace of his manner, and his speech, "sweeter than the note of the cicāda in the trees above his head."

Twenty years passed in these congenial pursuits, when Plato was induced to visit Syracuse for the second time. Dionysius had been succeeded by a son of the same name, a young and inexperienced prince. Dion hoped that the reforms which Plato had failed to effect under the father might be obtained from the more facile temper of the son. These expectations were not realized. The Tyrant, it is true, received Plato with distinguished honor; sacrifices were ordered in thanksgiving for his arrival, and for a time the entire aspect of the court was transformed. Simple repasts replaced the luxury of the royal banquets, while courtiers discoursed of philosophy, or studied the geometrical figures traced upon sanded floors. Such a state of things was not likely to continue. Old courtiers who had bided their time, began to poison the mind of the king, and the "Sophist from Athens" was the theme of constant ridicule. The weak prince, whose first enthusiasm had cooled, found the doctrines of Plato too severe for his luxurious and indolent nature. Dion was sent into exile, and Plato, after being kept for some time a prisoner in the palace, was glad to obtain permission to return to Athens. As the philosopher was about to embark, Dionysius said: "When thou art again in the Academy with thy philosophers, thou wilt speak evil of me." "God forbid," replied Plato, "that any in the Academy

should have so much time to waste as to speak of Dionysius at all."

Ten years later the philosopher visited Syracuse for the third and last time, not with any hope of effecting a change in the government, but to obtain the recall of his friend Dion, still in exile.

During the remaining years of his life, Plato was occupied in the revision of his works; according to the quaint expression of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, "combing and curling, and weaving and unweaving his writings after a variety of fashions." He died seated at his desk, still holding the pen with which he had traced so many immortal lines.

Of the philosophical system of Plato we cannot speak in detail. It may not, however, be out of place to remark briefly on the general tendency of intellectual development in Greece and the circumstances under which this great master took his place among the philosophers of his country.

Where Christianity has not appeared to exercise a controlling power, the moral and intellectual world vibrates restlessly between extremes, the reaction of one extravagance giving birth to another. Superstition is the child of scepticism, and unbridled luxury will equally produce its own contrast, as we see in the repulsive asceticism of such men as Antisthenes and Diogenes. During the ages preceding that of which we treat, the progress of Greek philosophy had been towards darkness rather than light, and the vague and contradictory teaching of the different schools gradually prepared the way for that class of teachers known as Sophists. To suppose that these latter corrupted the public mind, would be to ignore the state of morality in Greece in the fifth century before the Christian

era. It was a period in which literature had attained its highest perfection, and a naturally keen sense of the beautiful had reached its last development. Virtue even was a taste rather than a principle ; and both art and poetry took that earthly coloring which rendered the mind indisposed for higher aims, and engaged the imagination almost exclusively in the world of sense. It has been truly remarked that the Athenians of this time present an example of how far æsthetic perfection may exist side by side with the deepest moral corruption.

Of the Sophists it need only be said that they were worldly-minded instructors, contented to impart to the youth under their charge all that they cared to acquire, a showy education such as would qualify them to shine in private life by their conversational powers, in public assemblies by a showy rhetoric. This superficial instruction was all that was desired ; this they gave or rather sold, without taking any thought to elevate the moral standard of their disciples.

Amid this general spirit of incredulity, when God was well-nigh rejected, when virtue was held to be an idea, and truth only a name, a man, poor and unknown, trusting to his genius only, and to the divine impulse which stirred his soul, threw down the sculptor's chisel and went forth to advocate the cause of virtue and true philosophy. His object was the moral improvement of his fellow-men, his instruments were dialectics, definition, and induction.

Definition was regarded by Socrates as a point of the first importance, and he would not permit the use of any term, until by searching questions he had got to the bottom of its meaning, and reached, as it were, the inner core of truth. This exactness is not always

practised in our own day, and Max Müller justly remarks :

“Such terms as nature, law, freedom, necessity, body, substance, matter, church, state, revelation, inspiration, knowledge, belief, are tossed about in the wars of words as if everybody knew what they meant, and as if everybody used them in exactly the same sense ; whereas most people, and particularly those who represent public opinion, pick up these complicated terms as children, beginning with the vaguest conceptions, . . . but never taking stock, never either inquiring into the history of the terms which they handle so freely, or realizing the fulness of their meaning according to the strict rule of logical definition.”

Socrates had no need to travel in foreign lands ; his education had not been conducted in the schools of the philosophers—poverty forbade. He was trained under the free sky of Athens ; in the agora, the gymnasia, and the market-place ; where, among poets, philosophers, and statesmen, his keen and powerful intellect received a stimulus which books can never give. He was a novelty in Athens, and the Athenians, then as later, ever seeking to hear some new thing, gathered eagerly around him. An English writer * says of the new teacher :

“Though of repulsive personal appearance, his intellect was so crystal clear, his reason so exquisitely accurate, his vision so swift and keen, his readiness so remarkable, his agility in throwing an opponent, in twisting him into some unbearable position, so astounding,—there was something so preternatural about these powers of his mind, that he speedily became, amongst a city of famous men, of all the most distinguished.”

With a ready flow of wit and humor, Socrates never forgot the point which he wished to establish, or, as was most frequently the case, the fallacy he would

* Vaughan.

expose. The teachings of the Sophists furnished him with such abundant subject, that the philosophy of this great master lies open to the charge of being too negative in its character. It was easier to destroy than to build up, to expose a fallacy than to establish a great truth. The doctrine of the unity of God was not enunciated by Socrates with that openness and force which might have been expected from his fearless character. He believed, perhaps, that the minds of men were not prepared for so sublime a teaching, and considered that even the errors of polytheism were to be preferred to atheism, or to disbelief in a personal deity. He says to his judges :

“I do believe that there are gods, and in a far higher sense than any of my accusers believe in them.”

Trained in the school of Socrates, Plato imbibed the high sense of moral responsibility and the reverence for virtue which were governing principles in the life of his great master. There is, however, a distinction to be observed. Socrates labored among men whose hearts were corrupted by vice, while their intellects were clouded by the maxims of a false philosophy. Their moral improvement was his only aim, and he considered every hour as wasted in which he had done nothing towards this great end. He held, therefore, as of little worth, that knowledge which has no practical influence upon the lives of men. Plato, on the other hand, loved science for itself; his enthusiastic spirit followed eagerly the higher teachings of Socrates, inclining always to the theoretical and ideal portion of his system, which, however true and noble, must be joined with the practical lessons recorded by Xenophon to make a perfect whole.

Plato followed to still higher developments the teachings of his master ; while, however he avoided the pure idéalism of the Eleatic school, and the materialism of the Ionian, his doctrines were not always free from an admixture of error. He believed in the existence of two primary, incorruptible principles—God and matter. The world was framed by the Creator out of a chaotic and formless mass, after an immovable and perfect archetypal model. In this creation was placed a world-soul, which constituted a harmonizing link between the Deity and the archetypal world on the one hand, and blind, formless matter on the other. The world is good, as the work of a benevolent Deity ; all the imperfections which we find in nature result from the intractable and essentially evil nature of matter.*

Plato believed in the immortality of the soul with a faith firmer than that which he derived from the school of Socrates. While, however, this great truth was borne in upon his mind with a force which absolutely excluded doubt, his reasoning upon the subject is vague and unsatisfying. The philosopher claims the existence in the soul of ideas which it could not have drawn from the world of sense, nor acquired while clogged by a corporeal frame. These ideas and intuitions were received in some previous state, when the disembodied soul stood face to face with spiritual essences, and communicated freely with them. From the doctrine of pre-existence to that of a future state the reasoning is direct and simple, the defect being that the premise itself is by no means established.

* This doctrine concerning matter, taking larger developments, entered later into the wild and extravagant system of the Gnostics ; one instance among many of errors deduced from the fanciful and unsound theories of this philosopher.

Plato argued also that every state tends naturally to its contrary—life to death, while from death itself will come some higher form of life.

The soul, according to Plato, consists of two parts: the soul proper—divine and immortal, and the appetitive principle, whence come the lower instincts and desires. This last is possessed by man in common with the brute creation. Between these, but more allied to reason, are the passions, which mediate between the divine and the earthly, the intellectual and the sensuous principle.

It is impossible to enter fully into the philosophical system of this extraordinary man. His aims were always high and noble, and notwithstanding many errors and fanciful theories, it must be admitted that he was generally a successful champion of truth. If at times he seems, as in the "*Republic*," to sanction theoretically a code of public morals too low for even a pagan world, we must accept it as an instance of that inconsistency of which the greatest minds are capable when deprived of the definite guidance of a revealed law. We cannot doubt that the new philosophy served a providential purpose in checking the progress of unbelief, and preserving among the heathen some principles of natural religion. Their minds were thus prepared for the light of a fuller revelation, for the day when the voice of one greater than Plato should be heard in the Academic groves, announcing the word of Him whom they ignorantly worshipped, even the Unknown God.

The works of Plato are principally in the form of dialogues. Of these we have thirty-five, or fifty-six, if each book of the "*Republic*" and "*Laws*" be counted separately. He has left, also, three *Epistles*.

The subjects may be divided under three heads : Dialectics, Physics, and Ethics—the last including his political writings.

All are models of the purest Attic, and his style took naturally the form which would best express the loftiness of his conceptions—something between prose and poetry. His writings are distinguished by harmonious sweetness joined to the noblest eloquence.

DEATH OF SOCRATES.

We give the following passage from the *Phædo*.—Although familiar, the simple beauty of the narrative can hardly lose its charm by repetition. Socrates, who had been discoursing on the state of souls after death, thus continues :

“ ‘To affirm positively, indeed, that these things are exactly as I have described them, does not become a man of sense ; that however either this, or something of the kind, takes place with respect to our souls and their habitations—since our soul is certainly immortal—this appears to me most fitting to be believed, and worthy the hazard for one who trusts in its reality ; for the hazard is noble, and it is right to allure ourselves with such things, as with enchantments ; for which reason I have prolonged my story to such a length. On account of these things, then, a man ought to be confident about his soul, who during this life has disregarded all the pleasures and ornaments of the body as foreign from his nature, and who, having thought that they do more harm than good, has zealously applied himself to the acquirement of knowledge, and who having adorned his soul not with a foreign but its own proper ornament, temperance, justice, fortitude, freedom, and truth, thus waits for his passage to Hades, as one who is ready to depart whenever destiny shall summon him. You then,’ he continued, ‘*Simmias* and *Cebes*, and the rest, will each of you depart at some future time ; but now destiny summons me, as a tragic writer would say, and it is nearly time for me to betake myself to the bath ; for it appears to me to be better to drink the poison

after I have bathed myself, and not to trouble the women with washing my dead body.' 4

When he had thus spoken, Crito said, 'So be it, Socrates; but what commands have you to give to these or to me, either respecting your children, or any other matter, in attending to which we can most oblige you?'

'What I always say, Crito,' he replied, 'nothing new; that by taking care of yourselves you will oblige both me and mine and yourselves, whatever you do, though you should not now promise it; but if you neglect yourselves, and will not live as it were in the footsteps of what has been now and formerly said, even though you should promise much at present, and that earnestly, you will do no good at all.'

'We will endeavor then so to do,' he said; 'but how shall we bury you?'

'Just as you please,' he said, 'if only you can catch me, and I do not escape from you.' And at the same time smiling gently, and looking round on us, he said, 'I cannot persuade Crito, my friends, that I am that Socrates who is now conversing with you, and who methodizes each part of the discourse; but he thinks that I am he whom he will shortly behold dead, and asks how he should bury me. But that which I some time since argued at length, that when I have drunk the poison I shall no longer remain with you, but shall depart to some happy state of the blessed, this I seem to have urged to him in vain, though I meant at the same time to console both you and myself. Be ye then my sureties to Crito,' he said, 'in an obligation contrary to that which he made to the judges; for he undertook that I should remain; but do you be sureties that, when I die, I shall not remain, but shall depart, that Crito may more easily bear it, and when he sees my body either burnt or buried, may not be afflicted for me, as if I suffered some dreadful thing, nor say at my interment that Socrates is laid out, or is carried out, or is buried. For be well assured,' he said, 'most excellent Crito, that to speak improperly is not only culpable as to the thing itself, but likewise occasions some injury to our souls. You must have a good courage, then, and say that you bury my body, and bury it in such a manner as is pleasing to you, and as you think is most agreeable to our laws.'

When he had said thus, he rose, and went into a chamber to bathe, and Crito followed him, but he directed us to wait

for him. We waited, therefore, conversing among ourselves about what had been said, and considering it again, and sometimes speaking about our calamity, how severe it would be to us, sincerely thinking that, like those who are deprived of a father, we should pass the rest of our lives as orphans. When he had bathed, and his children were brought to him, for he had two little sons and one grown up, and the women belonging to his family were come, having conversed with them in the presence of Crito, and given them such injunctions as he wished, he directed the women and children to go away, and then returned to us. And it was now near sunset; for he spent a considerable time within. But when he came from bathing he sat down, and did not speak much afterwards. Then the officer of the Eleven came in, and standing near him, said, 'Socrates, I shall not have to find that fault with you that I do with others, that they are angry with me, and curse me, when, by order of the archons, I bid them drink the poison. But you, on all other occasions during the time you have been here, I have found to be the most noble, meek, and excellent man of all that ever came into this place; and, therefore, I am now well convinced that you will not be angry with me, for you know who are to blame, but with them. Now, then, for you know what I came to announce to you, farewell, and endeavor to bear what is inevitable as easily as possible.' And at the same time, bursting into tears, he turned away and withdrew.

And Socrates, looking after him, said, 'And thou, too, farewell; we will do as you direct.' At the same time turning to us, he said, 'How courteous this man is; during the whole time I have been here he has visited me, and conversed with me sometimes, and proved the worthiest of men; and now how generously he weeps for me. But come, Crito, let us obey him, and let some one bring the poison, if it is ready pounded, but if not, let the man pound it.'

Then Crito said, 'But I think, Socrates, that the sun is still on the mountains, and has not yet set. Besides, I know that others have drunk the poison very late, after it had been announced to them, and have supped and drunk freely. Do not hasten, then, for there is yet time.'

Upon this Socrates replied, 'These men whom you mention, Crito, do these things with good reason, for they think they shall gain by so doing, and I too with good reason shall not do so; for I think I shall gain nothing by drinking a

little later, except to become ridiculous to myself, in being so fond of life, and sparing of it when none any longer remains. Go then,' he said, 'obey, and do not resist.'

Crito having heard this, nodded to the boy that stood near. And the boy having gone out, and stayed for some time, came, bringing with him the man that was to administer the poison, who brought it ready pounded in a cup. And Socrates, on seeing the man, said, 'Well, my good friend, as you are skilled in these matters, what must I do?'

'Nothing else,' he replied, 'than, when you have drunk it, walk about until there is a heaviness in your legs, then lie down; thus it will do its purpose.' And at the same time he held out the cup to Socrates. And he having received it very cheerfully, neither trembling, nor changing at all in color or countenance, but, as he was wont, looking steadfastly at the man, said, 'What say you of this potion, with respect to making a libation to any one, is it lawful or not?'

'We only pound so much, Socrates,' he said, 'as we think sufficient to drink.'

'I understand you,' he said, 'but it is certainly both lawful and right to pray to the gods that my departure hence thither may be happy; which therefore I pray, and so may it be.' And as he said this he drank it off readily and calmly. Thus far, most of us were with difficulty able to restrain ourselves from weeping; but when we saw him drinking, and having finished the draught, we could do so no longer; but in spite of myself the tears came in full torrent, so that, covering my face, I wept for myself, for I did not weep for him, but for my own fortune, in being deprived of such a friend. But Crito, even before me, when he could not restrain his tears, had risen up. But Apollodorus even before this had not ceased weeping, and then bursting into an agony of grief, weeping and lamenting, he pierced the heart of every one present, except Socrates himself. But he said, 'What are you doing, my admirable friends? I indeed, for this reason chiefly, sent away the women, that they might not commit any folly of this kind. For I have heard that it is right to die with good omens. Be quiet, therefore, and bear up.'

When we heard this we were ashamed, and restrained our tears. But he, having walked about, when he said that his legs were growing heavy, laid down on his back; for the

man so directed him. And at the same time he who gave him the poison, taking hold of him, after a short interval examined his feet and legs; and then having pressed his foot hard, he asked if he felt it: he said that he did not. And after this he pressed his thighs; and thus going higher, he showed us that he was growing cold and stiff. Then Socrates touched himself, and said that when the poison reached his heart he should then depart. But now the parts around the lower belly were almost cold; when, uncovering himself, for he had been covered over, he said, and they were his last words, 'Crito, we owe a cock to Æsculapius; pay it, therefore, and do not neglect it.'

'It shall be done,' said Crito, 'but consider whether you have anything else to say.'

To this question he gave no reply; but shortly after he gave a convulsive movement, and the man covered him, and his eyes were fixed; and Crito, perceiving it, closed his mouth and eyes.

This, Eechēcrātes, was the end of our friend, a man, as we may say, the best of all of his time that we have known, and, moreover, the most wise and just."

—CARY.

The ideas entertained by Plato of the shadowy and unreal nature of the material world are well illustrated in the following passage from the "Republic: "

FROM THE REPUBLIC.

"Imagine a number of men living in an underground cavernous chamber, with an entrance open to the light, extending along the entire length of the cavern, in which they have been confined from their childhood, with their legs and necks so shackled that they are obliged to sit still and look straight forwards because their chains render it impossible for them to turn their heads round; and imagine a bright fire burning some way off, above and behind them, and an elevated roadway passing between the fire and the prisoners, with a low wall built along it, like the screens which conjurers put up in front of their audience, and above which they exhibit their wonders.'

'I have it,' he replied.

'Also figure to yourself a number of persons walking

behind this wall, and carrying with them statues of men, and images of other animals, wrought in wood and stone and all kinds of materials, together with various other articles, which overtop the wall ; and, as you might expect, let some of the passers-by be talking, and others silent.'

'You are describing a strange scene, and strange prisoners.'

'They resemble us,' I replied. 'For let me ask you, in the first place, whether persons so confined could have seen anything of themselves or of each other, beyond the shadows thrown by the fire upon the part of the cavern facing them?'

'Certainly not, if you suppose them to have been compelled all their lifetime to keep their heads unmoved.'

'And is not their knowledge of the things carried past them equally limited?'

'Unquestionably it is.'

'And if they were able to converse with one another, do you not think that they would be in the habit of giving names to the objects which they saw before them?'

'Doubtless they would.'

'Again : if their prison-house returned an echo from the part facing them, whenever one of the passers-by opened his lips, to what, let me ask you, could they refer the voice, if not to the shadow which was passing?'

'Unquestionably they would refer it to that.'

'Then surely such persons would hold the shadows to be the only realities?'

'Without a doubt they would.'

'Now consider what would happen if the course of nature brought them a release from their fetters, and a remedy for their foolishness, in the following manner. Let us suppose that one of them has been released, and compelled suddenly to stand up, and turn his neck round, and walk with open eyes toward the light ; and let us suppose that he goes through all these actions with pain, and that the dazzling splendor renders him incapable of discerning those objects of which he used formerly to see the shadows. What answer should you expect him to make, if some one were to tell him that in those days he was watching foolish phantoms, but that now he is somewhat nearer to reality, and is turned towards things more real, and sees more correctly ; above all, if he were to point out to him the several objects that are passing by, and question him, and compel him to answer

what they are? Should you not expect him to be puzzled, and to regard his own visions as truer than the objects now forced upon his notice?’

‘Yes, much truer.’

‘And if he were further compelled to gaze at the light itself, would not his eyes, think you, be distressed, and would he not shrink and turn away to the things which he could see distinctly, and consider them to be really clearer than the things pointed out to him?’

‘Just so.’

‘And if some one were to drag him violently up the rough and steep ascent from the cavern, and refuse to let him go till he had drawn him out into the light of the sun, would he not, think you, be vexed and indignant at such treatment, and on reaching the light would he not find his eyes so dazzled by the glare as to be incapable of making out so much as one of the objects that are now called true?’

‘Yes, he would find it so at first.’

‘Hence, I suppose, habit will be necessary to enable him to perceive objects in that upper world. At first he will be most successful in distinguishing shadows; then he will discern the reflections of men and other things in water, and afterwards the realities; and after this he will raise his eyes to encounter the light of the moon and stars, finding it less difficult to study the heavenly bodies and the heaven itself by night than the sun and the sun’s light by day.’

‘Doubtless.’

‘But when he recalls to mind his first habitation, and the wisdom of the place, and his old fellow-prisoners, do you not think he will congratulate himself on the change, and pity them?’

‘Assuredly he will.’

‘And if it was their practice in those days to receive honor and commendations one from another, and to give prizes to him who had the keenest eye for a passing object, and who remembered best all that used to precede and follow and accompany it, and from these data divined most ably what was going to come next, do you fancy that he will covet these prizes, and envy those who receive honor and exercise authority among them? Do you not rather imagine that he will feel what Homer describes, and wish fervently,

To drudge on the lands of a master,
Under a portionless wight.

and be ready to go through anything, rather than entertain those opinions, and live in that fashion ? ’

‘ For my own part,’ he replied, ‘ I am quite of that opinion ; I believe he would consent to go through anything rather than live in that way.’

‘ And now consider what would happen if such a man were to descend again and seat himself on his old seat. Coming so suddenly out of the sun, would he not find his eyes blinded with the gloom of the place ? ’

‘ Certainly he would.’

‘ And if he were forced to deliver his opinion again, touching the shadows aforesaid, and to enter the lists against those who had already been prisoners, while his sight continued dim, and his eyes unsteady,—and if this process of initiation lasted a considerable time,—would he not be made a laughing-stock, and would it not be said of him that he had gone up only to come back again with his eyesight destroyed, and that it was not worth while even to attempt the ascent ? And if any one endeavored to set them free and carry them to the light, would they not go so far as to put him to death, if they could only manage to get him into their power ? ’ ”

—DAVIES AND VAUGHAN.

The application being obvious, we omit the concluding portion of the dialogue in which the philosopher exalts the happiness of those who, struggling upward from the world of sense, gaze at length undazzled upon the true light, the “ Essential Form of Good.”

ARISTOTLE.

384-322 B.C.

This great man was born at Stagýra, a Greek colony in Chalcidicé. His father, Nicómachus, who was court physician to Amyntas II., king of Macedon, wrote on medicine and natural philosophy, and it is probable that he cultivated in his son a taste for learning, and a habit of philosophic inquiry.

While yet a boy, Aristotle was presented at court, and made the acquaintance of Philip, the future king

of Macedon. On the death of his father he visited Athens, where he devoted himself to the study of philosophy. He was soon distinguished by his acquirements, his extreme ardor in the pursuit of learning, and the patient energy with which he followed up every subject of investigation. He joined the students of the Academy, and Plato is said to have been charmed with the zeal of his young disciple, who, as he used to remark, required only the bit where others needed the spur. He called him the Mind of his school, and would sometimes exclaim, as he missed him from the ranks : “ Intellect is not here.”

The genius of Aristotle differed widely from that of his great master, and we are not surprised to learn that this divergence led sometimes to disputes on philosophical subjects, which were carried on with much warmth. The accusation that Aristotle was guilty of disrespect and ingratitude towards Plato may, however, be set aside as unworthy of attention.

In the year B.C. 343, Aristotle, at the request of Philip the Macedonian king, became the tutor of his son Alexander, then thirteen years of age. This office he discharged with equal zeal and ability during a period of eight years. The generosity, humanity, and the exceptional purity of character by which the young conqueror was distinguished during the early part of his career, were undoubtedly due to the instructions of his great preceptor. Alexander was not insensible to the value of such a master, and he is reported to have said that he honored Aristotle no less than his own father ; for whilst the one gave him life, the other gave him that which made life worth having.

After the accession of Alexander, Aristotle returned

to Athens, but he kept up a friendly correspondence with his royal pupil, and engaged him to employ the vast resources at his command for the advancement of learning. Alexander maintained, in every part of the then known world, many thousand persons whose business it was to collect and transmit to Aristotle specimens of birds, beasts, fishes, and plants. It is estimated that the king expended in this manner a sum equal to several millions of our money. From the information thus afforded, Aristotle drew the material of his great work upon Natural History. Of fifty volumes we have but a small portion remaining; but even this is considered of the highest importance.

Upon his return to Athens, Aristotle founded a school in opposition to the Academy. There was upon the right bank of the Ilissus a sacred enclosure called the Lyceum, which was dedicated to Apollo, and served as a place of exercise for the Athenian youth. It was adorned, by the liberality of Pisistratus and Pericles, with edifices and fountains, and planted with groves, whose quiet shades were favorable to study and retirement. Here Aristotle instructed his disciples, lecturing in the morning on abstruse subjects to a select few, and in the afternoon to all who chose to hear. These he called his morning and his evening walks; and from the manner in which he gave his instructions, his followers received the name of Peripatetics.

Aristotle taught at the Lyceum for about thirteen years, devoting a portion of his time to the experimental study of natural history, and the composition of his different works. It is said that when Alexander, intoxicated by success, forgot the lessons of his preceptor, the latter reproved him with a freedom

which the young conqueror could no longer endure. It does not appear, however, that he made his displeasure felt otherwise than by the withdrawal of his favor.

A large party in Athens had regarded Aristotle with dislike and suspicion as the instructor of the conqueror, and the intimate friend of two Macedonian kings. On the death of Alexander, the enemies of the philosopher took advantage of this feeling, and accused him before the Areopagus of favoring the Macedonian party; also, of certain acts of impiety. Aristotle had no desire to share the fate of Socrates. He fled to Chalcis, saying that "he would not give the Athenians the opportunity of committing a second crime against philosophy." Sentence of death was passed upon the illustrious fugitive; he was deprived of all his honors, and his name was ignominiously stricken from the roll of Athenian citizens. It has been said that Aristotle committed suicide, but this assertion has apparently no foundation. Intense mental labor had already exhausted a constitution naturally weak, and we do not require to seek for other cause than the grief and excitement occasioned by his misfortunes to account for his death, which took place in the first year of his exile, 322 B.C. He was interred at Stagyra, where he was honored by an altar and a tomb.

If Aristotle was favored in intellectual gifts, his personal appearance corresponded ill with these higher endowments. He was meagre in form, and the plainness of his features was heightened by a sharp and caustic expression. Energy and perseverance compensated for bodily weakness, and his eloquence was powerful and impressive, notwithstanding a shrill, un-

pleasing voice. Of his private character we have the most varying accounts. While we reject the statements of those who represent him as a slave to the vices which he reprovèd in others, it is probable that his practice of virtue hardly corresponded with the zeal with which he inculcated its maxims. Much allowance must be made for the bitterness of party feeling, and the strange facility with which the Athenians blackened the reputation of their best and greatest men.

The philosophy of Aristotle was in many respects opposed to that of Plato. Without warmth of feeling, imagination, or poetic fancy, he could neither comprehend nor follow the higher flights of his master, whom he surpassed, however, in all that required accurate discrimination or scientific method. A writer whom we have already quoted thus compares the two great leaders of philosophic thought :

“Plato was great as a man ; Aristotle was great as an intelligence. The more we know of Plato, the more we love him ; the more we know of Aristotle, the less we love him ; the more intimate our acquaintance with Plato’s works, the less scientific they appear ; the more we study Aristotle’s, the more profoundly we are impressed by their accuracy and depth. It was the moral elevation of Plato, and the spirituality of his temper, which gained him so immense a sway ; it was the intellectual sagacity and the logical force of Aristotle, which earned for him a lasting reputation.”

Plato believed that all reality was embraced in the world of archetypal forms, whilst Aristotle held that the world of sense was at the foundation of all knowledge. Plato looked upon the fundamental principle of the great Stagyræite as a deception, while the latter held his master’s theory as no better than a philosophical romance. It remained for men of later days, looking upon both systems in the clearer light of

Christian revelation, to reject the extremes into which these philosophers had been led, and to harmonize the great truths which they had taught. Natural science had the strongest attraction for Aristotle, and it seems probable that if he had lived at a time when that department of knowledge had taken larger developments, it might have engrossed his whole attention, to the exclusion of higher pursuits. He was the first to classify the animal kingdom ; he described accurately many animals then unknown to the scientific world ; he discriminated between the several animal faculties, and his experimental studies had almost led him to the great discovery of the circulation of the blood. Aristotle was the first to discriminate between the substance of things and their accidents, and to establish the philosophical notions of "matter" and "form." He also settled the notions or ideas of "time" and "space," showing their connection with matter.

Logic was to the clear mind of Aristotle the fundamental science ; he brought it to a definite form, devising so perfect a system of syllogistic reasoning that the rules for arriving at correct conclusions which he has laid down have never been superseded. In all that relates to natural religion, to the spiritual needs and aspirations of the soul, Aristotle is inferior to Plato. He has, nevertheless, by establishing habits of accurate thought, by teaching men to follow out every principle to its legitimate consequences, and thus to test its truth or falsehood, served the cause of religion no less effectually than his more spiritual-minded master. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul may perhaps be deduced from the writings of Aristotle, but it is nowhere clearly set forth. The soul is, according to him, distinct from the body, but

it is in "form" inseparable, or at least incapable of surviving in any self-conscious existence.

The charge of atheism which was formerly advanced against Aristotle would seem to be unjust. Indeed he is the first who gave to the world what is called the cosmological argument for the existence of God. He states it as follows :

"Although every single movement and existence in the world has a finite cause back of it, yet back of this infinite series of finite causes there must be an infinite, immaterial Being, a first Something, unmoved, all-moving, pure energy, absolute reason,—God."

While Aristotle thus admits the existence of an intelligent First Cause, he rejects completely the idea of a benevolent or governing Providence. According to him the Deity influences the world by no voluntary action, but unconsciously, as the magnet does the iron. If God were to know the world, He would know the evil in it, and therewith contract a contaminating knowledge which would debase the Knower.*

It would take us far beyond the limits of the present work to enter into any detail of the system of this great philosopher. We have endeavored to give briefly some idea of the general tendency of his teachings, and to show wherein he differed from the great founder of the Academic school.

The logical works of Aristotle, five in number, are generally published under the head of *Organon*. We have also sixteen books on *Physics*, fourteen on *Metaphysics*, and three works on *Morals*. There are also separate works on *Economics*, *Government*, the *Art of Rhetoric*, and the *Art of Poetry*.

The style of this philosopher is clear and concise ;

* Döllinger : *Gentile and Jew*.

he avoids rhetorical appeals, and seems to have lacked altogether the play of fancy which might have lent a greater vivacity to the serious subjects of which he treats.

MENANDER.

342-291 B.C.

In speaking of the new comedy of the Greeks, allusion has been made to Menander, who brought that form of the drama to its highest perfection.

Menander wrote in the fourth century before our era. His comedies aimed to represent contemporary life and manners, and were remarkable for vivid portrayal of character. The dramatist put in practice the lesson which he himself gives :

“It was not, after all, so wisely said,
That precept, ‘Know Thyself ;’ I reckon it
Of more advantage to know other men.”

That he had attained this intimate knowledge of men we may judge by the opinions of those most competent to decide. The following epigram is attributed to Aristophanes the grammarian :

“O Life ! and O Menander ! speak and say
Which copied which—or nature, or the play ?”

Notwithstanding the undoubted merit of these productions, they lacked the broad, comic humor of the old comedy, and were hardly so popular with the multitude. The few scattered fragments which remain serve to show that with an Epicurean philosophy, and a code of morals too well adapted to his age and times, there was often a vein of philosophical thought and a grave melancholy such as we find in the following passage :

“If thou would'st know thyself, and what thou art,
Look on the sepulchres as thou dost pass ;
There lie within the bones and little dust
Of mighty kings and wisest men of old ;
They who once prided them on birth or wealth,
Or glory of great deeds, or beauteous form ;
Yet nought of these might stay the hand of Time.
Look,—and bethink thee thou art even as they.”

Of the works of Menander some fragments may be found in the writings of the early Christian fathers. Many single verses have passed into proverbial use, and one familiar sentence: “Evil communications corrupt good manners,” has come down to us in the inspired writings.

As the comedies of Plautus and Terence were, for the most part, translations or adaptations from Menander, the remarks made upon these will throw light upon the works of the older poet. How much his comedies have lost in the hands of his Roman translators we can never know.

MISANTHROPY AND DISCONTENT.

“Suppose some god should say—‘Die when thou wilt,
Mortal, expect another life on earth ;
And, for that life, make choice of all creation
What thou wilt be ; dog, sheep, goat, man, or horse ;
For live again thou must ; it is thy fate ;
Choose only in what form ; there thou art free,’—
So help me, Crato, I would fairly answer,—
Let me be all things, anything but man !
He only of all creatures feels affliction.
The generous horse is valued for his worth ;
And dog by merit is preferred to dog ;
The warrior cock is pampered for his courage,
And awes the baser brood.—But what is man ?
Truth, virtue, valor, how do they avail him ?
Of this world's good the first and greatest share
Is flattery's prize ; the informer takes the next,

And barefaced knavery garbles what is left.
 I'd rather be an ass than what I am,
 And see these villains lord it o'er their betters."

—CUMBERLAND.

LUSTRATION.

"If your complaints were serious, 'twould be well
 You sought a serious cure ; but for weak minds
 Weak medicines suffice.—Go, call around you
 The women with their purifying water ;
 Drug it with salts and lentils, and then take
 A treble sprinkling from the holy mess ;
 Now search your heart ; if that reproach you not,
 Then, and then only, you are truly pure."

—*Ibid.*

ARATUS.

B. C. 277.

Aratus was a native of Soli, a town on the sea-coast of Cilicia, in Asia Minor. He was educated with Dionysius Heracleitus, a Stoic philosopher, and his extraordinary learning won for him the patronage of Antigonus Gonatas, king of Macedon. He enjoyed also the friendship of Theocritus and the favor of Ptolemy Philadelphus. At the request of Antigonus he composed an astronomical poem, entitled *Phenomena*. It contains, in elegant verse, a general view of all that was known at that time concerning the heavenly bodies.

The poem commences with the following lines, memorable as having been quoted by St. Paul in his speech before the Areopagus (Acts xvii. 28) :

"From Jove begin my song ; nor ever be
 The name uttered ; all are full of thee ;
 The ways and haunts of men ; the havens, and the sea.
 On thee our being hangs ; in thee we move ;
 Are all thy offspring, and the seed of Jove.

Benevolent, he warns mankind to good,
 Urges to toil, and prompts the hope of food.
 He shows when best the yielding glebe will bear
 The goaded oxen and the cleaving share.
 He shows what seasons smile, to delve the plain,
 To set the plant, or sow the scattered grain.
 'Twas he that placed those glittering signs on high,
 Those stars, dispersed throughout the circling sky;
 From these the seasons and the times appear.
 The labors, and the harvests of the year.
 Hence men to him their thankful homage raise,
 Him, first and last, their theme of joy and praise.
 Hail, Father! wondrous! whence all blessings spring!
 Thyself the source of every living thing!
 Oh, of mellifluous voice! ye Muses, hear!
 And, if my prayer may win your gracious ear,
 Your inspiration, all ye Muses, bring,
 And aid my numbers, while the stars I sing."

THEOCRITUS.

B. C. 270.

This celebrated pastoral poet was born in Syracuse, and flourished during the reigns of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, and Hiero II., of Syracuse. He repaired to Alexandria on the invitation of Ptolemy, and formed the acquaintance of several eminent scholars and poets who frequented the court of that prince.

The celebrated Greek version of the Bible, known as the Septuagint, was made about this time.

After spending some years in Egypt, Theocritus returned to Sicily, where he died. It has been supposed that he was strangled by the order of Hiero, in revenge for some satirical invectives; but this assertion seems to rest only upon a passage of Ovid, who speaks of a Syracusan poet without mentioning the name of Theocritus.

The Sicilian poet will always occupy the first rank among pastoral writers. He has been imitated by many, but never equalled in those points which constitute the peculiar charm of this species of composition. As Dryden remarks :

“A simplicity shines throughout all he writes. He is softer than Ovid, and touches the passions more delicately. Even his Doric dialect has an incomparable sweetness in its clownishness ;—like a fair shepherdess in her country russet, and with her Yorkshire tone.”

The most serious defect of Theocritus, and one which cannot well be excused, is the coarseness and indelicacy which disfigure many of his Idyls. In putting such language into the mouths of his rustics, the poet may have depicted character ; but, as Elton remarks :

“It is character that were better hidden ; the depraved grossness of manners corrupted, and of human nature degenerated.”

Theocritus has left thirty idyls and twenty-one smaller pieces under the name of epigrams.

IDYL XXI.

THE FISHERMAN.

ASPHALION AND A COMRADE.

“Two fishers old lay in their wattled shed,
Close to the wicker, on one sea-moss bed ;
Near them the tools wherewith they plied their craft ;
The basket, rush trap, line, and reedy shaft,
Weed-tangled baits, a drag-net with its drops,
Hooks, cords, two oars, an old boat fixed on props ;
Their rush-mat, clothes, and caps, propt either head ;
These were their implements by which they fed ;
And this was all their wealth. They were not richer,
By so much as a pipkin or a pitcher ;
All else seemed vanity : they could not mend
Their poverty, which was their only friend.

They had no neighbors ; but upon the shore,
 The sea soft murmured at their cottage-door.
 The chariot of the moon was midway only,
 When thoughts of toil awoke those fishers lonely ;
 And shaking sleep off they began to sing.

ASPHALION.—The summer nights are short, when Zeus the
 king,
 Makes the days long, some say—and yet this night
 I've seen a world of dreams ; nor yet 'tis light.
 What's all this ? am I wrong ? or say I truly ?
 And can we have a long, long night in July ?

FRIEND.—Do you the summer blame ? The seasons
 change,
 Nor willingly transgress their wonted range.
 From care, that frightens sleep, much longer seems
 The weary night.

ASPHALION.—Can you interpret dreams ?
 I've seen a bright one, which I will declare,
 That you my visions, as my toil, may share.
 To whom should you in mother-wit defer ?
 And quick wit is best dream interpreter.
 We've leisure, and to spare ; what can you do,
 Lying awake on leaves, as I and you,
 Without a lamp ? They say the town-hall ever
 Has burning lights, its booty fails it never.

FRIEND.—Well let us have your vision of the night.

Asphalion dreamed that he took with rod and line
 a huge fish of solid gold. He concludes :

And with my line I safely towed him home,
 And swore that I on sea no more would roam,
 But ever after would remain on land,
 And there my gold, like any king, command.
 At this I woke ;—your wits, good friend, awaken,
 For much I fear to break the oath I've taken.

FRIEND.—Fear not : you swore not, saw not with your
 eyes
 The fish you saw ; for visions all are lies.
 But now no longer slumber : up, awake !
 And for a false, a real vision take.
 Hunt for the foodful fish that is, not seems ;
 For fear you starve amid your golden dreams."

The following lines were written in praise of an ivory distaff sent by the poet to Theugenis, wife of the physician Nicias :

THE DISTAFF.

“Distaff! quick implement of busy thrift,
Which careful housewives ply, blue-eyed Athene's gift,
We go to rich Miletus, where is seen
The fane of Cypris 'mid the rushes green :
Praying to mighty Zeus, for voyage fair,
Thither to Nicias would I now repair,
Delighting, and delighted by my host,
Whom the sweet-speaking Graces love the most
Of all their favorites ; thee, distaff bright !
Of ivory wrought, with art most exquisite,
A present for his lovely wife I take.
With her thou many various works shalt make ;
Garments for men, and such as women wear,
Of silk, whose color is the sea-blue clear.
And she so diligent a housewife is,
That ever, for well-ankled Theugenis,
'Thrice in a year are shorn the willing sheep
Of the fine fleeces, which for her they keep.
She loves what love right-minded women all ;
For never should a thriftless prodigal
Own thee with my consent ; 'twere shame and pity !
Since thou art of that most renowned city,
Built by Corinthian Archias erewhile,
The marrow of the whole Sicilian isle.
But in the house of that physician wise,
Instructed how by wholesome remedies
From human kind diseases to repel,
Thou shalt in future with Ionians dwell,
In beautiful Miletus ; that the fame
For the best distaff Theugenis may claim,
And thou mayst ever to her mind suggest
The memory of her song-loving guest.
(The worth of offering from friend we prize,
Not in the gift but in the giver lies.”

—CREECH.

FROM IDYL XXIV.

THE INFANT HERCULES.

“ Young Hercules had now beheld the light
Only ten months, when once upon a night,
Alcmena washed and fondled at her breast
Her lovely boys, and laid them to their rest.
Their cradle was a noble shield of brass,
Won by her lord from slaughtered Pterilas.
Gently she laid them down, and gently laid
Her hand on both their heads, and yearned and said:
‘ Sleep, sleep, my boys ! a light and pleasant sleep,
My little souls, my twins, my guard and keep !
Sleep happy, and wake happy ! ’ And she kept
Rocking the mighty buckler, and they slept.
At midnight, when the Bear went down, and broad
Orion’s shoulder lit the starry road,
There came, careering through the opening halls
On livid spires, two dreadful animals—
Serpents, whom Juno, threatening as she drove,
Had sent there to devour the sons of Jove.
Orbing their blood-fed bellies in and out,
They towered along ; and as they looked about,
An evil fire out of their eyes came lamping ;
A heavy poison dropped about their champing.
And now they have arrived, and think to fall
To their dread meal, when lo ! (for Jove sees all),
The house is lit as with the morning’s break,
And the dear children of Alcmena wake.
The younger one, as soon as he beheld
The evil creatures coming on the shield
And saw their loathesome teeth, began to cry
And shriek, and kick away the clothes, and try
All his poor little instincts of escape ;
The other, grappling, seized them by the nape
Of either poisonous neck, for all their twists,
And held like iron in his little fists.
Alcmena heard the noise, and ‘ Wake ! ’ she cried ;
‘ Amphytrion, wake ! for terror holds me tied ;
Up ! stay not for thy sandals. Hark ! the child—
The youngest,—how he shrieks ! The babe is wild !

And see the walls and windows ! 'Tis as light
 As if 'twere day, and yet 'tis surely night.
 'There's something dreadful in the house ; there is,
 Indeed, dear husband !' He arose at this,
 And seized his noble sword, which overhead
 Was always hanging at the cedar-bed.
 All in an instant, like a stroke of doom,
 Returning midnight smote upon the room.
 Amphytryon called, and woke from heavy sleep
 His household, who lay breathing hard and deep :
 ' Bring lights here from the hearth ! lights ! lights ! and guard
 The doorways ! rise, ye ready laborers hard !'
 He said ; and lights came pouring in, and all
 The busy house was up in bower and hall ;
 But when they saw the little infant, how
 He grasped the monsters, and with earnest brow
 Kept beating them together, playthingwise,
 They shrieked aloud ; but he, with laughing eyes,
 Soon as he saw Amphytryon, leaped and sprung,
 Child-like, and at his feet the dead disturbers flung."

—Anon.

CLEANTHES.

FLOURISHED ABOUT 264 B.C.

Cleanthes was a native of Assus, in Lydia, a disciple of Zeno, and, after the death of that philosopher, master of his school. When Cleanthes repaired to Athens to study philosophy, poverty obliged him to work at night, that he might gain a scanty subsistence, and have leisure during the day to attend the schools of philosophy. As he appeared strong and healthy, and had no apparent means of support, Cleanthes was, according to Athenian usage, summoned before the Areopagus, to give an account of his manner of living. Upon this, he produced as witnesses the gardener for whom he drew water, and a woman who employed him to grind meal ; thus proving that he

lived by the labor of his hands. The judges were struck with admiration, and ordered that ten minæ should be given to him out of the public treasury. This gratuity Zeno would not permit him to accept. Cleanthes continued for many years so very poor, that he was obliged to write his master's lectures on bones and shells, being unable to purchase better materials. Cleanthes wrote much, but none of his compositions remain, except a hymn to Jupiter, preserved in the Anthology. This is remarkable, not only for its great beauty, but as a relic of natural religion, undefiled by the mingling of pagan superstition.

HYMN TO JUPITER.

“Most glorious of th’ immortal Powers above !
Oh ! thou of many names ! Mysterious Jove !
For evermore Almighty ! Nature’s source !
That governest all things in their ordered course !
All hail to thee ! since, innocent of blame,
E’en mortal creatures may address thy name ;
For all that breathe, and creep the lowly earth,
Echo thy being with reflected birth ;
Thee will I sing, thy strength for aye resound ;
The universe, that rolls this globe around,
Moves whereso’er thy plastic influence guides,
And, ductile, owns the God whose arm presides.
The lightnings are thy ministers of ire ;
The double-forked, and ever living fire ;
In thy unconquerable hands they glow,
And at the flash all nature quakes below.
Thus, thunder-armed, thou dost creation draw
To one immense, inevitable law ;
And, with the various mass of breathing souls,
Thy power is mingled, and thy spirit rolls.
Dread genius of creation ! all things bow
To thee ; the universal monarch thou !
Nor aught is done without thy wise control,
On earth, or sea, or round th’ ethereal pole,
Save when the wicked, in their frenzy blind,
Act o’er the follies of a senseless mind.

Thou curb'st th' excess ; confusion to thy sight
 Moves regular ; th' unlovely scene is bright.
 Thy hand, educing good from evil, brings
 To one apt harmony the strife of things.
 One ever-during law still binds the whole,
 Though shunned, resisted, by the sinner's soul.
 Wretches ! while still they course the glittering prize,
 The law of God eludes their ears and eyes.
 Life then were virtue, did they this obey ;
 But wide from life's chief good they headlong stray.
 Now glory's arduous toils the breast inflame ;
 Now avarice thirsts, insensible of shame ;
 Now sloth unnerves them in voluptuous ease ;
 And the sweet pleasures of the body please.
 With eager haste they rush the gulf within,
 And their whole souls are centered in their sin.
 But, oh, great Jove ! by whom all good is given !
 Dweller with lightnings, and the clouds of heaven !
 Save from their dreadful error lost mankind !
 Father ! disperse these shadows of the mind !
 Give them thy pure and righteous law to know ;
 Wherewith thy justice governs all below.
 Thus honored by the knowledge of thy way,
 Shall men that honor to thyself repay ;
 And bid thy mighty works in praises ring,
 As well befits a mortal's lips to sing ;
 More blest, nor men, nor heavenly powers, can be,
 Than when their songs are of thy law and thee ! "

—ELTON.

CALLIMACHUS.

ABOUT 260 B.C.

This poet was a native of Cyrene ; he was a professor of literature at Alexandria, where he filled the office of librarian under Ptolemy Philadelphus and his son, Ptolemy Everégetes. Of many works on a variety of subjects there remain only a few inscriptions. We give the following :

ON HERACLEITUS.

"They told me, Heracleitus, thou wert dead ;
 And then I thought, and tears thereon did shed,
 How oft we two talked down the sun ; but thou,
 Halicarnassian guest ! art ashes now.
 Yet live thy nightingales of song ; on those
 All-plundering death shall ne'er his hand impose."

—H. N. COLERIDGE.

APOLLONIUS RHODIUS.

ABOUT 240 B.C.

This poet taught rhetoric for some time at Rhodes, whence the name by which he is distinguished. He went afterwards to Alexandria, where he succeeded Eratosthenes, as librarian to Ptolemy Epiphanes.

While employed in this office, Apollonius wrote the poem on which his reputation chiefly rests. The subject is the Argonautic expedition, and the poet is held by the best critics to have attained generally a respectable mediocrity. Some passages have, however, been much admired. We give the following :

DELIBERATION OF MEDEA ON HER PROMISE TO JASON.

"Night then brought darkness o'er the earth ; at sea
 The mariners their eyes from shipboard raised,
 Fixed on the star Orion, and the Bear.
 The traveller and the keeper of the gate
 Rocked with desire of sleep ; and slumber now
 Fell heavy on some mother, who had wept
 Her children in the grave. No bay of dogs,
 No noise of tumult, stirred the city streets ;
 All hushed in stillest darkness. But sweet sleep
 Soothed not Medea. . . .
 'Were it better now, this very night,
 Here in my chamber, to forsake my life ?
 So, by a sudden death, to 'scape at once
 All this reproach ; before my deeds have wrought
 This full disgrace, unworthy of a name ?'

She said, and to her casket went, full-stored
 With drugs ; some healthful, some of deadly bane.
 She placed it on her knees, and wept ; the tears
 Unceasing bathed her bosom ; flowing forth,
 Spite of herself, abundantly, for grief
 Of her hard fate. And now the impulse rose
 To cull and taste the drugs that poison life.
 She loosed the casket's fastenings ; with ill hap
 Gathering the mortal herbs, when, suddenly,
 Came o'er her mind a horror of the grave.
 Long time she mused in doubt ; life's pleasing cares,
 In smiling vision, flitted on her sight ;
 She thought upon the pleasures that are found
 Among the living ; she remembered her
 Of the gay playmates of her virgin hours ;
 The sun more pleasant in her fancy shone
 Than ere his light had been ; and, more and more,
 Her fondness grew for each remembered thing.
 She then replaced the casket from her knees,
 For Juno turned her heart ; and, straight she longed
 For morning to appear, that she might give
 The promised drugs of saving power, and greet
 The face of Jason. Oft she drew the bolts
 That closed her chamber door, and with long look
 Watched for the light. Then morning on her gaze
 Darted its lovely splendor, and the throng
 Appeared in motion through the city streets."

—ELTON.

POLYBIUS.

204-122.

The life of this great man belongs to the history
 of his country no less than to its literature. He was
 born in Arcadia, and enjoyed in his youth rare advan-
 tages, being instructed in political science by his
 father Lycætes, while the great Philopœmen was his
 master in the art of war.

Polybius accompanied his father, who was sent to
 Egypt on an embassy, and while in that country

collected much of the material which he afterwards embodied in his history. After the conquest of Macedon, he was, with other prominent Greeks, brought to Italy. Polybius won the favor of Scipio and Fabius, the sons of Æmilius Paulus, and by their kind intervention was permitted to reside in Rome at the house of their father. Here he enjoyed an opportunity for historical study and investigation, of which he profited largely, as may be seen in his works.

When Polybius was permitted to return to Greece, he endeavored to dissuade his countrymen from undertaking a war with the Romans. They refused to listen to his counsel, and had abundant reason to repent of their folly. The Historian accompanied Scipio to Africa, and was present at the taking of Carthage. The affairs of Greece caused him to hasten his return, but he arrived only after the destruction of Corinth, which fell the same year as the great African capital (B.C. 146). From this time Polybius devoted himself to his country, striving by every means to alleviate the miseries of conquest. He obtained in many cases favorable terms from the Romans, and conferred so many benefits that the Achæans erected a statue to his honor, inscribing on the base: "Had we listened to Polybius, Hellas had been saved."

Polybius wrote a General History in forty books, of which five only remain entire. The narrative embraces a period of fifty-three years, from the commencement of the second Punic war, 218 B.C., to the destruction of Carthage and Corinth, 146 B.C. The historian endeavors to show his countrymen that the superiority of Rome was won, not, as they loved to imagine, by a combination of favorable circumstances,

but rather by a wise policy steadfastly followed, and by the spirit of patriotism which united all the citizens of the great republic.

The style of this writer will not bear a comparison with that of the great classic writers, but in accuracy, love of truth, and sound judgment he stands unrivalled. He was a statesman, instructing statesmen, and his work shows how little he cared for the praise of literary success. Reason is his chief characteristic, and with it are joined rigid impartiality and a profound respect for virtue.

BION.

FLOURISHED ABOUT 187 B.C.

This poet was born near Smyrna, in the district of Phlossa. It would seem that he lived in Sicily; and we learn from the elegy of his disciple Moschus, that he died of poison administered by some person in authority. Bion is far inferior to Theocritus in simplicity, but he excels in description, and his imagery is correct and pleasing. His writings are principally of a lyric or philosophic character.

EROS AND THE FOWLER.

“Hunting the birds within a bosky grove,
A birder, yet a boy, saw winged Love
Perched on a box-tree branch : rejoicing saw
What seemed a large bird, and began to draw
His rods together, and he thought to snare
Love, that kept ever hopping here and there.
Then fretting that he could not gain his end,
Casting his rods down, sought his aged friend,
Who taught him bird-catching—his story told,
And showed Love perching. Smiled the ploughman old
And shook his head, replying to the boy :
‘Against this bird, do not your rods employ ;

It is an evil creature ; shun him—flee ;
 Until you take him, happy will you be.
 But if you ever come to manhood's day,
 He that now flies you, and still bounds away,
 Will of himself, by no persuasion led,
 Come suddenly, and sit upon your head.' "

MOSCHUS.

SECOND CENTURY B.C.

This graceful poet was a native of Syracuse, a friend and disciple of Bion. He has left four idyls and some lesser pieces. We give the greater portion of his elegy on Bion, which, although somewhat overloaded with imagery, will always be admired for elegance and tenderness of feeling.

ELEGY ON BION.

" Sicilian Muses, pour the dirge of woe :
 Ye nightingales, whose plaintive warblings flow
 From the thick leaves of some embowering wood,
 Tell the sad loss to Arethusa's flood :
 The shepherd Bion dies ; with him is dead
 The life of song ; the Doric muse is fled.

Sicilian Muses, pour the dirge of woe :
 Where Strymon's gliding waters smoothly flow,
 Ye swans, chant soft with saddest murmuring
 Such notes as Bion's self was wont to sing ;
 Let Thracia's maids, the nymphs of Hæmus, learn,
 The Doric Orpheus slumbers in his urn.

Sicilian Muses, pour the dirge of woe :
 The herds no more that chant melodious know ;
 No more beneath the lonely oak he sings,
 But breathes his strain to Lethe's sullen springs ;
 The mountains now are mute ; the heifers pass
 Slow-wandering by, nor browse the tender grass.

Sicilian Muses, pour the dirge of woe :
 Tears for thy loss through famous cities flow ;
 Ascra less pensive bends o'er Hesiod's urn,
 And less Bœotia's woods for Pindar mourn ;

Not so towered Lesbos weeps Alcæus' strains,
 Or Cos for lost Simonides complains ;
 Paros regrets Archilochus no more,
 And Mitylene scorns for thine her Sappho's lore.

Sicilian Muses, pour the dirge of woe :

Ah me ! ah me ! the fading mallows strow
 The garden beds ; the parsley's verdant wreath,
 And crisped anise shed their bloomy breath :
 Yet the new year shall fresh existence give,
 Warm their green veins, and bid them bloom and live.
 But we, the great, the valiant, and the wise,
 When once in death we close our pallid eyes ;
 In earth's dark caverns, senseless, slumber o'er
 The long and endless sleep, the sleep that wakes no more

Sicilian Muses, pour the dirge of woe :

Poison has touched thy lips ; its venom slow
 Has curdled in thy veins ; and could'st thou sip,
 Nor poison turn to honey on thy lip ?
 What man so hard could mix the draught for thee,
 Or bid be mixed, nor feel thy melody ?

Sicilian Muses, pour the dirge of woe :

But retribution sure shall deal the blow ;
 Oh ! that as Orpheus, in the days of yore,
 Ulysses, or Alcides, passed before,
 I could descend to Pluto's house of night,
 And mark if thou would'st Pluto's ear delight,
 And listen to thy song ; oh, then rehearse
 Some sweet Sicilian strain, Bucolic verse ;
 To soothe the maid of Enna's vale, who sang
 These Doric songs, while Ætna's uplands rang.
 Not unrewarded shall thy ditties prove ;
 As the sweet harper, Orpheus, erst could move
 Her breast to yield his dear departed wife,
 Treading the backward road from death to life ,
 So shall he melt to Bion's Dorian strain,
 And send him joyous to his hills again.
 Oh could my touch command the stops like thee,
 I too would seek the dead, and sing thee free."

—ELTON.

MELEAGER.

FLOURISHED ABOUT 60 B.C.

This poet was a native of Gādara in Palestine. He resided at Tyre, but died in the island of Cos, where he had sought a refuge in his old age. Meleager was the first who made an anthology, or a collection of the epigrams and fugitive pieces of earlier poets. The Heliodora immortalized in the following verses, is supposed to have been the wife of the poet, although some have imagined from certain expressions that she was his daughter.

THE GARLAND.

“A fresh garland will I braid
 Of lilies blithe and fair,
 Of the hyacinth's blue shade,
 And the crocus' golden hair,
 Of narcissus dewy bright,
 Of myrtle, never sere,
 With the violet virgin white,
 And sweet rose to lovers dear.
 Thus, for Heliodora's hair,
 Freshest, fairest flowers I've twined,
 But none are half so sweet, so fair,
 As the dear, dear locks they'll bind.”
 —PETER.

LAMENT FOR HELIODORA.

“Tears, Heliodora, tears alone may be
 The offering from love's abounding store
 To such as dwell upon the Stygian shore,—
 And tears, my buried one! I give to thee!

They stream upon thy tomb; and with them stream
 A tide of wild lamentings—memories sweet—
 Longings that never can fulfilment meet,
 And many an unforgotten happy dream!

I, Meleager, desolate, forlorn—
 Feel woe, a grudging woe my soul o'erwhelm,
 To think how all unprized in that dark realm,
 The treasure is, which death from me has torn.

Where is my blossom ? Spoiled by Death's rude grasp !
 Spoiled in its promise, and its bloom defiled !
 O Earth ! thou universal mother mild,
 My loved one to thy bosom softly clasp !"

—ANON.

TO ZENOPHILÉ.

"'Tis now that the white violets steal out the spring to
 greet,
 And that among his longed-for showers, Narcissus smiles so
 sweet.
 'Tis now that lilies, upland born, frequent the slopes of green,
 And that the flower that lovers love, of all the flowers the
 queen,
 Without an equal anywhere, in full-blown beauty glows ;
 Thou knowest it well, Zenophilé ! persuasion's flower, the
 rose.
 Ah ! why, ye hills and meadows, does bright laughter thus
 illumine
 Your leafy haunts ? So lavish why, and prodigal of bloom ?
 Not all the wreaths of all the flowers that Spring herself
 might cull,
 As mine own Virgin e'er could be one half so beautiful."

—PROF. WILSON.

DIONYSIUS HALICARNASSUS.

FLOURISHED ABOUT 35 B.C.

Dionysius, named also Halicarnassus, from his birth-place, is the author of a historical work entitled *Roman Antiquities*. It traces the history of Rome from the earliest times to the beginning of the first Punic war. Of twenty books, ten remain entire.

The work of Dionysius, though possessing a certain

value, is not considered trustworthy in its details, as the author is often misled by his own ignorance and credulity. He also distorts facts in order to gratify the pride of his countrymen by attributing a Greek origin to their Roman conquerors.

DIODORUS SICULUS.

FLOURISHED ABOUT 30 B.C.

This writer was a native of Sicily. He wrote a Universal History, in forty books, of which only fourteen have come down to us entire. This history covers a period of 1138 years, exclusive of the time preceding the Trojan war. The undertaking was too vast to admit of accuracy, but the work is important, as having preserved an immense amount of material, laboriously collected from older writers whose productions are otherwise unknown.

PLUTARCH.

FIRST CENTURY A.D.

Plutarch was a native of Chæronea, in Bœotia, where his family were respected for their position and eminent talents. He enjoyed in his boyhood the example of ancient manners and patriarchal life, his father, grandfather, and great grandfather being still spared to guide the younger branches of the family. Plutarch was educated at Delphi. He afterwards taught a school at Rome, and on the death of Trajan, who had been his friend and benefactor, he returned to Chæronea. Here he wrote those biographies with which his name is always connected.

The work was entitled by Plutarch "Parallel Lives." In these we have the history of forty-six persons distinguished by their virtues, talents, or adventures, and so arranged that a Greek is always compared with a Roman. Besides these, there are five lives taken singly, and twelve biographies have been lost.

Plutarch is one of the most popular of ancient writers, and his biographies contain a vast amount of information, with much practical philosophy. He is nevertheless so careless of chronological arrangement that his narrative consists at times of incoherent facts, which leave a confused impression on the mind. The praise of impartiality cannot be given to Plutarch. He exalts his Grecian heroes at the expense of truth, and is hardly just to the Romans with whom he places them in comparison.

ARRIAN.

SECOND CENTURY OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA.

Arrian, a Greek historian, a native of Nicomedia, in Bithynia, flourished under Adrian and the Antonines. He was a disciple of Epictetus, and has preserved in his writings much of the practical teachings of that philosopher. His most important work is a "History of the Eastern Expeditions of Alexander the Great." It was compiled from authentic memoirs, and is of the highest authority.

The style of Arrian was formed on that of Xenophon, and his history is distinguished by the same graphic description and sound judgment.

LUCIAN.

ABOUT 120-210 A.D.

This celebrated satirist was born at Samosata, on the banks of the Euphrates. According to his own account, given in a piece entitled "The Dream," the parents of Lucian, too poor to afford him the advantages of a liberal education, apprenticed him to his uncle, a sculptor by profession, and apparently the great man of the family. The first essay of Lucian in his new avocation was unfortunate. He broke a handsome block of marble by his awkwardness, and his uncle, seizing a whip that lay near, administered so severe a correction that the boy ran home to his parents, complaining bitterly of the treatment he had received. On the same night, he had—or invented, as the reader may decide—a remarkable dream. Two women standing by his couch laid hold of him on either side. One, who represented Liberal Education, was of beauteous aspect and gracious bearing; the other, the Genius of Sculpture, was of coarse and masculine appearance, "her robe high-girt and covered with dust, very like my uncle the stone-cutter, when he was polishing his work." The dreamer's choice was soon made; he threw himself into the arms of the lovely spirit on his right, and as the Genius of Sculpture advanced in fury against him, she suddenly stiffened into stone. Whether the parents of Lucian received this vision with the simple faith which he seems to demand of the reader, we do not know; but his end was gained, and he never returned to the workshop of his uncle.

Of the life of this writer we know but little. In whatever manner the necessary means were supplied, he obtained the education so much desired, and adopted the profession of rhetoric. He practised as a pleader at Antioch, and afterwards, having established a fair reputation for eloquence, delivered lectures in the principal towns of Syria, Greece, Italy, and Gaul. When Lucian had attained his fortieth year, he abandoned a profession of which he had grown weary, and devoted the rest of his life to literary composition and the study of philosophy. He resided at Athens, where he established his family in comfort, and lived at ease upon the wealth acquired by the exercise of his talents as a pleader. He was afterwards in straitened circumstances, and was glad to accept the office of Register to the Roman governor of Egypt. The emoluments were good, and he was allowed to perform the duties by deputy. Lucian remarks that this favor was not bestowed until he had "one foot in Chāron's boat." He lived, however, to enjoy it during a long period, dying, according to some, at the age of ninety, according to others, of one hundred years.

Lucian wrote much, but his reputation rests chiefly on his Dialogues. Alluding to the loftier compositions of Plato, he says that he brought dialogue, that had been lost in the clouds, to walk upon the earth, and that despoiling it of tragic garb, he joined it with pleasantry and the comic muse. The style of this writer does not bear any mark of the declining taste of the age, or of the barbarisms of his native Syria.

Lucian has been called the Aristophanes of his time. The comparison is just, both as to his merits and defects, the corruption of morals and the depraved

taste of the age being the only palliation that can be offered for the grossness of too many passages.

The "Dialogues of the Gods" were written with the avowed purpose of throwing ridicule upon the fables and absurdities of the popular mythology. Professing and probably holding no creed, Lucian struck a more deadly blow at the superstitions of the ancient world than did the graver and more decorous attacks of the Christian apologists. We cannot wonder that he was denounced as an atheist by his contemporaries, in particular by the philosophers, whose immoral lives and dishonest pretensions were subjects of his unsparing ridicule. We will give a few examples of his style.

In the following passage, Timon of Athens, reduced to poverty, thus addresses Jupiter :

"TIMON.—O Jupiter !—god of Friendship, god of Hospitality, god of Sociality, god of the Hearth, Lightning-flasher, Oath-protector, Cloud-compeller, Thunderer—or by whatever name those moon-struck poets please to call you (especially when they have a hitch in the verse, for then your great stock of titles helps to prop a lame line, or fill a gap in the metre)—where be your flashing lightnings now, and your rolling thunders, and that terrible levin-bolt of yours, blazing and red-hot? Plainly, all these are nonsense—a mere humbug of the poets, nothing but sonorous words. That thunderbolt which they are always singing of, that strikes so far and is so ready to hand—it's quenched, I suppose! got cold, and hasn't a spark of fire left in it to scorch rascals. A man who has committed perjury is more afraid now of the snuff of last night's lamp than of your invincible lightning."

In the Dialogues of the Dead we have traces of graver thoughts, wholesome lessons conveyed under the garb of comedy. The souls, crowding into Charon's boat, are obliged to lay aside all that they prized. Mercury is marshalling the ghostly array.

"MERC.—You sir, there, in the purple and diadem—who are you?

LAMPSICHUS.—Lampsichus, king of Gelo.

MERC.—And what d'ye mean by coming here with all that trumpery?

LAMP.—How? Would it be seemly for a king to come here unrobed?

MERC.—Well, for a king, perhaps not; but for a dead man, certainly. So put it all off.

LAMP.—There, I've thrown my riches away.

MERC.—Yes, and throw away your pride too, and your contempt for other people. You'll infallibly swamp the boat if you bring all that in.

LAMP.—Just let me keep my diadem and mantle.

MERC.—Impossible—off with them too.

LAMP.—Well, anything more? because I've thrown them all off, as you see.

MERC.—Your cruelty—and your folly—and your insolence—and bad temper—off with them all!"

So the patrician parts with his honors, the general with his laurels and his victories—in the kingdom of the dead there is peace. The philosopher, who hopes to pass unquestioned, is thus addressed by Mercury:

"MERC.—Who's this pompous and conceited personage, to judge from his looks—he with the knitted eyebrows there, and lost in meditation—that fellow with the long beard.

MENIPPUS.—One of those philosophers, Mercury—or rather those cheats and charlatans. Make him strip too; you'll find some curious things hid under that cloak of his.

MERC.—Take your habit off, to begin with, if you please—and now all that you have there. Great Jupiter! what a lot of humbug he was bringing with him—and ignorance, and disputatiousness, and vainglory, and useless questions, and prickly arguments, and involved statements—ay, and wasted ingenuity, and solemn trifling, and quips and quirks of all kinds. And your lies, and pomposity, and thinking yourself better than anybody else—away with all that, I say! Why, if you bring all that aboard, a fifty-oared galley wouldn't hold you!"

Arrived in the gloomy realm of shades, Diogenes

questions Mausólus, king of Cária, as to his haughty demeanor.

“DIOGENES.—Prithee, my Carian friend, why do you give yourself such airs and claim precedence of us all?

MAUSOLUS.—In the first place, my friend of Sinópe, by reason of my royal estate. I was king of all Caria, ruled over much of Lydia, reduced several of the islands, advanced as far as Miletus, and subdued most part of Ionia. Then, because I was handsome and tall, and a good warrior; most of all, because I have a magnificent monument set up over me at Halicarnassus—no man that ever died has the like; so beautifully is it finished, men and horses sculptured to the life out of the finest marble, you can scarce find even a temple like it. Don't you think I have a right to be proud of all this?

DIOG.—Because of your kingdom, you say?—and your fine person, and the great weight of your tomb?

MAUS.—Yes; that is what I am proud of.

DIOG.—But, my handsome friend (ha! ha!), you haven't much left of that strength and beauty that you talk about. If we asked any one to decide between our claims to good looks, I don't see why they should prefer your skull to mine. The tomb, indeed, and the marble statues, the men of Halicarnassus may show to their visitors, and boast of them as ornaments of their land; but as to you, my good friend, I don't see what good your monument does you, unless you may say this—that you bear a greater weight upon you than I do, pressed down as you are by all those heavy stones.”

The following, between Menippus and Mercury, is in the same strain:

MENIPPUS AND MERCURY.

“MENIPPUS.—I say, Mercury, where are all the handsome men and women? Come, show me about a little; I am quite a stranger here.

MERCURY.—I haven't time, really. But, look yonder, on your right; there are Hyacinthus, and Narcissus, and Nereus, and Achilles—and Tyro, and Helen, and Leda; and, in short, all the celebrated beauties.

MEN.—I can see nought but bones and bare skulls—all very much alike.

MERC.—Yet all the poets have gone into raptures about those very bones which you seem to look upon with such contempt.

MEN.—Any way, show me Helen, for I should never be able to make her out from the rest.

MERC.—This skull is Helen.

MEN.—And it was for this that a thousand ships were manned from all Greece, and so many Greeks and Trojans died in battle, and so many towns were laid waste !

MERC.—Ay ! but you never saw the lady alive, Menippus, or you would surely have said with Homer :

‘ No marvel Trojans and the well-armed Greeks
For such a woman should long toils endure :
Like the immortal goddess is she.’

If one looks at withered flowers which have lost their color, of course they seem to have no beauty ; but when they are in bloom, and have all their natural tints, they are very beautiful to see.

MEN.—Still I do wonder, Mercury, that the Greeks should never have bethought themselves that they were quarrelling for a thing that was so short-lived, and would perish so soon.

MERC.—I have really no leisure for moralizing, my good Menippus. So pick out a spot for yourself, and lay yourself down quietly ; I must go and fetch some more dead people.”

In the “ Judgment of the Dead,” even the tone of comedy is lost, and the picture of guilt unmasked is full of tragic reality. Each mortal coming for judgment bares his breast, and there, burnt in characters unseen to human eyes, but visible to the Judge of Souls, is the print and scar of every unrepented sin. The tyrant Megapénthes, driven shrinking and terrified into the presence of Rhadamanthus, is found all livid with the marks imprinted by each cruel deed and shameful crime of his mortal life. The Judge doubts as to what may be a fitting punishment, and Cyníscus the philosopher, who has witnessed against him, speaks :

"CYN.—It is the custom, I believe, for all your dead here to drink the water of Lethe ?

RHAD.—Certainly.

CYN.—Then let this man alone not be permitted to taste it.

RHAD.—And why so ?

CYN.—So shall he suffer the bitterest punishment in the recollection of all that he has been and done, and all the power he had while on earth, and in the thought of his past pleasures.

RHAD.—Excellently well advised ! Sentence is passed. Let him be fettered and carried away to Tartarus, there to remember all his past life."

There is surely more of natural religion than of atheism in the passages we have quoted; and it is probable that Lucian, rejecting the superstitions of heathenism, and ignorant of revelation, still held, though vaguely, the belief of the immortality of the soul, and a state of reward and punishment beyond the grave.

THE SALE OF THE PHILOSOPHERS.

SCENE, A SLAVE-MART ; JUPITER, MERCURY ; *philosophers, in the garb of slaves, for sale ; audience of buyers.*

JUPITER.—Now, you, arrange the benches, and get the place ready for the company. You bring out the goods and set them in a row ; but trim them up a little first, and make them look their best, to attract as many customers as possible. You, Mercury, must put up the lots, and bid all comers welcome to the sale. Gentlemen, we are here going to offer you philosophical systems of all kinds, and of the most varied and ingenious description. If any gentleman happens to be short of ready money he can give his security for the amount and pay next year.

MERCURY (*to Jupiter*).—There are a great many come, so we had best begin at once, and not keep them waiting.

JUP.—Begin the sale, then.

MERC.—Whom shall we put up first ?

JUP.—This fellow with the long hair, the Ionian. He's rather an imposing personage.

MERC.—You, Pythagoras ! step out, and show yourself to the company.

JUP.—Put him up.

MERC.—Gentlemen, we here offer you a professor of the very best and most select description—who buys? Who wants to be a cut above the rest of the world? Who wants to understand the harmonies of the universe, and to live two lives?

CUSTOMER (*turning the philosopher round and examining him*).—He's not bad to look at. What does he know best?

MERC.—Arithmetic, astronomy, prognostics, geometry, music, and conjuring—you've a first-rate soothsayer before you.

CUST.—May one ask him a few questions?

MERC.—Certainly; (*aside*) and much good may the answers do you.

CUST.—What country do you come from?

PYTH.—Samos.

CUST.—Where were you educated?

PYTH.—In Egypt, among the wise men there.

CUST.—Suppose I buy you, now—what will you teach me?

PYTH.—I will teach you nothing—only recall things to your memory.

CUST.—How will you do that?

PYTH.—First, I will clean out your mind, and wash out all the rubbish.

CUST.—Well, suppose that done, how do you proceed to refresh the memory?

PYTH.—First, by long repose and silence—speaking no word for five long years.

CUST.—Why, look ye, my good fellow, you'd best go teach the dumb son of Cræsus. I want to talk, and not be a dummy. Well, but after this silence and these five years?

PYTH.—You shall learn music and geometry.

CUST.—A queer idea, that one must be a fiddler before one can be a wise man!

PYTH.—Then you shall learn the science of numbers.

CUST.—Thank you, but I know how to count already.

PYTH.—How do you count?

CUST.—One, two, three, four——

PYTH.—Ha! what you call four is ten, and the perfect triangle, and the great oath by which we swear.

CUST.—Now, so help me the great Ten and Four, I never heard more divine or more wonderful words!"

The skeptic Pyrrho, under the name of Pyrrhia, is put up for sale. The intended customer questions him :

“Tell me, now, what do you know ?

PYRRHIA.—Nothing ?

CUST.—What do you mean ?

PYRRH.—That nothing seems to me certain.

CUST.—Are we ourselves nothing ?

PYRRH.—Well, that is what I am not sure of.

CUST.—Don't you know whether you are anything yourself ?

PYRRH.—That is what I am still more in doubt about.

CUST.—What a creature of doubts it is !

Come, I must buy you. (*To Mercury.*) What shall we say for him ?

MERC.—An Attic mina. = ~~8~~14

CUST.—Here 'tis. Now, fellow, have I bought you or not, tell me ?

PYRRH.—Well 'tis a doubtful question.

CUST.—Not at all—at least I've paid for you.

PYRRH.—I reserve my opinion on that point ; it requires consideration.

CUST.—Follow me ; at all events, that's a servant's duty.

PYRRH.—Are you sure you're stating a fact ?

CUST. (*impatiently*).—There's the auctioneer, and there's the money, and there are the bystanders to witness.

PYRRH.—Are you sure there are any bystanders ?

CUST.—I'll have you off to the grinding-house, sir, and make you feel I'm your master by very tangible proofs.

PYRRH.—Stay—I should like to argue that point a little.”

These satires exposed Lucian to the enmity of a large class, and he was accused of treating philosophy with contempt, and throwing ridicule on the most venerable names. From these charges he defends himself in a characteristic dialogue entitled, “The Resuscitated Professors.” The author is represented as flying for his life, pursued by the enraged philosophers, to whom Pluto has granted leave of absence, that they

may avenge the insults heaped upon them. Lucian is seized, and while his enemies dispute as to what multiform kind of death may suffice to expiate their several wrongs, he recovers his presence of mind, and obtains a hearing. He is granted a trial in the temple : Philosophy herself is chosen as judge, while Virtue, Temperance, Justice, and Education, who are following in her train, are assessors of the court. Lucian perceives Truth, a form colorless and hardly to be distinguished, and summons her to the trial. She comes, bringing Liberty and Free Speech. Plato is chosen as accuser, but declines the office, which is readily undertaken by Diogenes. The cynic cannot forget that he was valued at two oboli at the late Sale of *the* Philosophers. After an animated debate, the satirist is acquitted, and even Diogenes acknowledges that he is the champion of truth and true philosophy.

In the satires on society there is humor, and much which may apply to the follies and petty vices of any age.

In some of his dialogues Lucian attacks with just severity the monstrous superstitions imported from Egypt and Asia, which were gaining ground in Rome and Athens. He represents Jupiter, Apollo, and the rest, the " Old Families of Olympus," expressing their aristocratic feelings of indignation at seeing themselves obliged to admit dog-headed monsters, apes and bulls to the celestial banquet. Lucian also ridicules the credulity of those who, rejecting every system of religion, became the dupes of each sorcerer or diviner, and received with undoubting faith the most childish communications from the world of spirits. There is something in these passages which reminds one of the spiritual circles of our own day, and of the inconsist-

ency which, to use the words of Lucian himself, "believes everything—and nothing."

This writer has left two short romances, in one of which we have, besides many other adventures, a voyage to the moon. Lucian gives full scope to his imagination, without tasking his ingenuity, like an author of our own day, in order to give an air of scientific probability to the absurd and the impossible. He carries out fully the declaration frankly made in the preface, where he says :

"Having nothing true to tell (for I never met with any memorable adventure), I have turned my thoughts to lying."

We will conclude our remarks upon this author with a short notice of the only authentic work in which he mentions the Christians. It is an account of one Peregrinus, of whose tragical end Lucian was an eyewitness. This man was an Asiatic Greek, who, after a profligate youth, made profession of Christianity—insincerely, as Lucian concludes from his subsequent career.

By his talents and learning, joined to consummate hypocrisy, Peregrinus gained the confidence of the Church. Lucian says :

"You know they still reverence that great man, Him that was crucified in Palestine for introducing these new doctrines unto the world."

The author suggests, shrewdly enough, the motive that sustained Peregrinus in such a course of hypocrisy. After alluding to what he calls the absurd confidence of the Christians with regard to a future life, and to the doctrine of "their first law-giver," that all men were brothers, he adds :

“So they hold all things alike in contempt, and consider all property common, trusting each other in such matters without any valid security.”

A clever impostor might therefore, as he observes, soon become rich by practising on the credulity of these simple people.

Peregrinus was, however, found guilty of profanation, and expelled from the assemblies of the Christians. He next appeared as a Cynic philosopher, and after a career of vice and imposture, finding his credit failing, sought to arouse public attention. He effected his purpose by the announcement that he would burn himself solemnly on the last day of the Olympic games. This he actually did ; but Lucian, who was present, says that the unhappy man hoped to the last that his followers would interfere and prevent the sacrifice. They, however, were not unwilling to gain reputation and notoriety at their master's expense, and the crowd who had lingered after the close of the games, had no mind to be cheated of the spectacle. When at length, after many postponements, an evening was named, and the wretched man appeared before the funeral pyre, he was dismayed by the encouraging shouts of the multitude and the silence of his own friends. Peregrinus turned deathly pale, but it probably required more courage to draw back at that last moment than to face death itself. His disciples aided with officious zeal. Peregrinus himself, trembling and with a ghastly countenance, lit the pyre, and throwing off his cloak and staff, plunged amid the flames. Lucian, whose spirit of satire never deserted him, tells us that, going home that same night, he met certain disciples of Peregrinus, and venturing some jokes on the occasion, narrowly escaped a beating.

Philopatris, a work containing gross calumnies against the Christians, was formerly attributed to Lucian, but is now believed to be the composition of some obscure writer. In *Peregrinus* we find the spirit which generally prevailed in the heathen world with regard to the new faith—ignorance and contemptuous indifference, but nothing which betrays intentional malice or misrepresentation.

LONGINUS.

213-273 A.D.

Dionysius Cassius Longinus is the latest in point of time of the pagan writers whose works are entitled to a place among the Greek classics. His residence at the court of Zenobia, queen of Palmyra, the war undertaken under his advice, and its unhappy termination, are matters of history. Zenobia sought to appease the wrath of Aurelian by accusing Longinus as the author of her prolonged resistance, and the emperor stained the glory of his victory by the death of that great man.

Of many works composed by Longinus there remains only an *Essay on the Sublime*, this even being imperfect. It is, however, sufficient to establish his reputation, and to suggest the value of that which has been lost. In speaking of the value of conciseness of expression, Longinus says :

“So likewise the Jewish legislator, no ordinary person, having conceived a just idea of the power of God, has nobly expressed it in the beginning of his law : ‘And God said—What?—Let there be light, and there was light. Let the earth be, and the earth was.’”

MISCELLANEOUS EXTRACTS.

In conclusion we would give some verses from poets who have not found a place in this brief compendium of Greek literature—also a few extracts from the Anthology.

HOME.

“Cling to thy home ! If there the meanest shed
Yield thee a hearth, and shelter for thy head,
And some poor plot, with vegetables stored,
Be all that heaven allots thee for thy board—
Unsavory bread, and herbs that scattered grow,
Wild on the river-bank or mountain-brow,
Yet e’en this cheerless mansion shall provide
More heart’s repose than all the world beside.”

—LEONIDAS OF TARENTUM.—BLAND.

ON TEARS.

“Be temperate in grief ! I would not hide
The starting tear-drop with a stoic’s pride—
I would not bid the o’erburdened heart be still,
And outrage Nature with contempt of ill.
Weep ; but not loudly ! He whose stony eyes
Ne’er melt in tears, is hated by the skies.”

—EUPHORION.—MERIVALE.

A WISH.

“O that we had the art to know
Each man by more than outward show ;
To ope the door of every breast
And see the soul’s most secret place ;
Then close it fast, and, thus possess,
Cling to our friends with strict embrace.”

ANTIPATER OF THESSALONICA.—MERIVALE.

ON WOMAN.

“For this, and only this, I’ll trust a woman :
That if you take life from her she will die,
And being dead she’ll come to life no more ;
In all things else I am an infidel.”

—ANTIPHANES.

ON THE DEPARTED.

"Cease, mourner, cease complaint, and weep no more.
 Your lost friends are not dead, but gone before ;
 Advanced a stage or two upon that road
 Which you must travel in the steps they trod.
 In the same inn we all shall meet at last,
 There take new life and laugh at sorrows past."

—*Ibid.*

GREEK POETESSES.

"These the maids of heavenly tongue,
 Reared Pierian cliffs among ;
 Anyte, as Homer strong,
 Sappho, star of Lesbian song ;
 Erinna, famous Telesilla,
 Myro fair, and fair Praxilla ;
 Corinna,—she that sang of yore,
 The dreadful shield Minerva bore ;
 Myrtis sweet, and Nossis, known
 For tender thought and melting tone ;
 Framers all of deathless pages,
 Joys, that live for endless ages ;
 Nine the muses famed in heaven,
 And nine to mortals earth has given."

ANTIPATER.—*Edinburgh Review.*

FROM THE ANTHOLOGY.

Inscription on a Trophy of the Persian war in the Temple of Minerva.

"From wounds and death they rest—this bow and quiver ;
 Beneath Minerva's holy roof forever ;
 Once did their shafts along the battle speed
 And drink the life-blood of the charging Mede."

It was customary for young girls about to marry, to offer in the temple their childish ornaments and toys. Youths entering on manly sports and avocations, dedicated in the same manner the instruments of their boyish games.

DEDICATION TO DIANA.

"Timárete, her wedding-day now near,
 To Artemis has laid these offerings here,—
 Her tambourine, her pleasant ball, the net
 As a safe guardian o'er her tresses set ;

Her maiden dolls, in mimic robes arrayed,
 Gifts fitting for a maid to give a maid.
 Goddess, thy hand upon her kindly lay,
 And keep her holy in thy holy way."

—ANON.

A LAD'S DEDICATION TO MERCURY.

"To Hermes, this fair ball of pleasant sound,
 This boxen rattle, fraught with lively noise,
 These maddening dice, this top well whirling round,
 Philocles has hung up his boyhood's toys."

—LEONIDAS.

Among many epitaphs we select the following :

"Zosimus, who when alive, was only a slave in the body,
 Now, in the body as well, freedom at last has obtained."

—DEMASKIOS

FROM GARNETT'S IDYLS AND EPIGRAMS.

"I, whom the simple tombstone covers thus,
 At five years died, the child Callimachus ;
 And hence, by Heaven's benign appointment, know
 Few of man's days, and little of his woe."

—LUCIAN.

ON A VIRGIN'S TOMB.

"Drop o'er Antibia's grave a pious tear,
 For virtue, beauty, wit, lie buried here.
 Full many a suitor sought her father's hall,
 To gain the virgin's love ; but death o'er all
 Claimed dire precedence—who shall death withstand
 Their hopes were blasted by his ruthless hand."

ANYTE.—KEEN.

ON THE DEATH OF A CHILD.

"I wept Theonoë's loss ; but one fair child
 Its father's heart of half its woe beguiled :
 And now, sole source of hope and solace left,
 That one fair child the envious Fates have reft.
 Hear, Proserpine, my prayer, and lay to rest
 My little babe upon its mother's breast."

BIANOR.—GOLDWIN SMITH.

ON A STATUE OF HERMES.—HERMOCREON.

"Sit passer-by, this plane-tree's shade beneath,
 Whose leaves are stirred when soft the zephyrs breathe.
 Here I am stationed, Maia's son renowned,
 To guard Nicagoras' goods and fruitful ground."

ON A GRAVEN GEM.

"A tiny stone, a jasper, here displays,
 Five oxen carved, who seem to live to graze;
 And soon the little herd would wander hence,
 If not imprisoned by their golden fence."

—ANON.

The following, from the poet Agathías, is in a lighter strain:

TO A CAT WHICH HAD KILLED A FAVORITE BIRD.

"O, cat in semblance, but in heart akin
 To canine raveners, whose ways are sin;
 Still at my hearth a guest thou dar'st to be!
 Unwhipt of justice, hast no dread of me?
 Or deemest the sly allurements shall avail
 Of purring throat and undulating tail?
 No! as to pacify Patroclus dead,
 Twelve Trojans by Pelides' sentence bled,
 So shall thy blood appease the feathered shade,
 And for one guiltless life shall nine be paid."

—GARNETT.

ON A STATUE OF LYSIPPUS.—OPPORTUNITY.

"'The sculptor whence?' 'From Sicyon' 'Who?' 'Lysippus is his name.'
 'And you?' 'I'm Opportunity, that all things rule and tame.'
 'On tiptoe, why?' 'I always run.' 'Why winglets on your feet—
 And double too?' 'Before the wind I fly with progress fleet.'
 'Why is a razor in your hand?' 'To teach men this to know,
 That sharper than a razor's edge the times for action grow.'
 'Why this lock upon your forehead?' 'That you all may seize me there.'
 'And why, then, is your occiput so very bald and bare?'

‘That none who once have let me pass, may ever have the
power
To pull me back, and bring again the once neglected hour.’
‘Why did the artist fashion you?’ ‘For your instruction,
friend,
And placed me in this vestibule these lessons to commend.’”

—POSIDIPPUS.

II*

III.

ROMAN LITERATURE.

EARLY ROMAN LITERATURE.

LANGUAGE.

IT would be impossible, in so limited a work as the present, to enter into any detailed account of the origin of the Latin language. It was composite in character, being derived from the Etruscan, which was itself drawn principally from three sources: Pelasgian, Umbrian, and Oscan. The Latin words which resemble the Greek may be considered Pelasgian, the rest as Umbrian and Oscan. As both Greeks and Pelasgians sprung from the same Indo-European stock, the affinity between the Greek and Latin languages is readily explained. When the Latin became more copious and polished, it borrowed directly and largely from the Greek.

The Pelasgians, who settled Etruria at a very early period, were the most ancient inhabitants of Greece. Coming originally from Asia, they crossed the Hellespont, and made settlements in the Greek islands and around the shores of the Ægean. They mingled later with the Hellenic race. It is not known whether the Pelasgians who made their home in Etruria emigrated from Greece or from Asia. They were, as is proved by the remains of their cities, fortifications and tombs, advanced in the arts of civilized life. These ancient Etrurians possessed a regular alphabet, a system of notation, and a literature, which seems to have consisted principally of hymns sung at religious festivals, and historical annals. We may conclude, therefore, that the Romans derived from them not only their

mythology and language, but whatever knowledge they could boast in the departments of art and science.

(Classic Latin enjoyed a comparatively brief existence; hardly more than eight centuries. The language which was used to record on brazen tablets the treaty, laws, etc., of the first period of the Republic was unintelligible to a Roman of the Augustan age.) (Latin was sufficiently formed for literary purposes about two and a half centuries before our era, and it may be said that in the sixth century it had ceased to be a spoken tongue) (It entered readily into combination with ruder dialects, and for this reason forms an important element in the languages of modern Europe.)

Among the Romans as elsewhere, poetry preceded prose, and the Saturnian metre, which they adopted from the Etruscans, generally prevailed. The structure of this verse is extremely simple. As in modern versification, stress or pronunciation took the place of quantity. The line contained two parts, each consisting of three feet, having the effect of trochees, although, as we have said, they were marked by accent rather than quantity. The whole is preceded by an unaccented syllable termed *anacrusis*.*

When the taste and literature of the Romans were formed on Greek models, the Greek rules of quantity prevailed, and the heroic hexameter was generally adopted. It is a remarkable fact that with the decline of Latin literature the Saturnian verse revived, and the rhythm of alternate beats, such as we find in modern poetry, took the place of the classic versification. That the Saturnian verse did not wholly merit the

* Macaulay gives the following line from a nursery song as an example of a perfect Saturnian :

“The queen was in her párlor | éáting breád and hóney.”

reprobation of Horace and others, we may judge by the beauty of many of the mediæval hymns. We need only instance the simple grandeur of strains like the

“Dies iræ, dies illa,
Solvat sæculum in favilla.”

THE DRAMA.

The first approach to anything like dramatic representation among the Romans may be found in the Fescennine verses. These were satiric songs which, accompanied by music and dancing, formed a favorite amusement at the rural festivals. They degenerated like the old comedy of the Greeks, and the laws of the Twelve Tables contain enactments restraining their licentiousness and coarse personalities. Thus kept in check, they continued popular for many centuries.

The next advance towards the legitimate drama was made by the Oscans. The exhibitions consisted of scenes in caricature of national characteristics. There was always a personage corresponding to the clown of modern pantomime, and much of the wit lay in broad practical jokes. These entertainments were sometimes known as *Ludi Osci*, but are more generally called *Fabulæ Atellanæ*, from a town in Campania where they were first performed. The actors in the Atellan Fables incurred neither loss of caste nor the other penalties attendant on the profession of the regular comedian, and the young Romans loved to take part as amateurs in these popular entertainments. They were distinguished by their uproarious mirth, but seem to have been kept within due bounds both by law and public opinion.

LIVIVS ANDRONICVS,

(Who flourished in the third century before our era, was a native of Tarentum, and, the freedman of a noble Roman, M. Livius Salinātor.) Becoming perfectly cōversant with the Latin tongue, (he wrote a translation, or perhaps an imitation, of the Odyssey in Saturnian verse.) (He composed also tragedies, which, as is shown by the names, Ægísthvs, Ajax, Hélena, were adaptations from Greek originals.) (These were well received, but the young Romans would not permit the old national entertainments, with the joyous dance and extemporaneous effusions in which they could take part, to be set aside for the graver drama, where they were silent spectators. The *Fabulæ* became therefore an after-piece, in which the *Histriones*, or regular actors, were never allowed to appear.)

It cannot be said that tragedy was at any time a favorite entertainment of the Roman people. When a composition of this character achieved a temporary success, the circumstance was generally due not so much to the merit of the play as to the exterior splendor of the stage appointments. (During the consulship of Pompey the Great, two tragedies of Livius Andronicus, the “Clytemnestra” and the “Trojan Horse,” were performed at the inauguration of a new theatre.) Cicero tells us that in one of these, three thousand bucklers and other arms, the spoils of conquered nations, were exhibited on the stage. In the other there was introduced a procession of six hundred mules, probably bearing warlike trophies. Companies of cavalry and infantry fought also in mimic cōmbat on the scene.

We can understand that amidst this gorgeous display the real merit of the drama was but little regarded. Even comedy possessed small attraction when compared with the splendor of military triumphs, or the combats of the amphitheatre. The former, with their trains of prisoners, chariots laden with spoils, and the mimic representation of captured cities, brought sensibly before their eyes the power and glory of their country. (In the living tragedies of the arena, the Roman found an excitement more congenial to his ~~rude~~ nature than any which could be furnished by the highest achievement of dramatic art.)

NÆVIUS.

THIRD CENTURY B.C.

Nævius may be considered as the first Roman poet. He was also a soldier, and served with distinction in the first Punic war. His earliest literary works were comedies and tragedies, the subjects of the latter being generally Greek. In order to hold up to derision the vices and follies of the day, he had recourse to compositions which resembled the Atellan farces, but were not, like them, extemporaneous.

The production on which the fame of Nævius principally rests is an epic poem on the first Punic war, of which but a few fragments remain. It was written principally in the Saturnian metre, and was universally admired by the contemporaries of the poet. His genius is acknowledged by Cicero and Horace, although the latter confesses that the verses of the old Roman bard were associated in his mind with the chastisements by which his master enforced an appreciation of their merits.

Nævius was hostile to the aristocracy, and incurred the enmity of some of the great houses of Rome by his satirical verses. He was imprisoned for a libel against the Metelli, and having offended a second time, was exiled to Utica, where he died.

ENNIUS.

239-169 B.C.

This poet represents a transition stage in the literature of Rome, being the last of the oldest, and we may say the first of the new school of Latin writers. He loved the old literature which was passing away, the songs which were still the delight of rural festivals, the metrical legends which woke memories of the past, and held their place in the hearts of those who had first heard them as cradle songs. Notwithstanding this regretful admiration of the past, Ennius appreciated the beauties of Greek literature, and was the founder of that school of poetry which reached its full development in the Augustan age.

Ennius was born at an obscure village in Calabria. His family, although not wealthy, was ancient and honorable. The poet began his career as a soldier, but after a single campaign abandoned the profession and took up his residence in Rome. Here he maintained himself by giving instruction in Greek literature. Cato the Censor and Scipio Africanus were among his most intimate friends. Ennius was buried in the family tomb of the Scipios, at the request of the conqueror, whose fame he had celebrated in his verse.

Ennius did not attain any marked excellence as a tragedian; his fame rests altogether on his epics. The great work, entitled the "Annals," was, as its name

suggests, a history of the rise and progress of Rome from the earliest legendary period to his own day. It was difficult to give to so vast and varied a subject anything of the unity which is required in an epic. The poet had, to compensate for this, a rich fund of heroic legend, whose embellishment must have been a grateful task. Of the success of Ennius in forming a connected narrative we can hardly judge by the fragments which remain, but even these show that he possessed high powers of description, and drew characters with a skilful hand. His battles are full of fire and spirit; the soldier and the poet breathe in every line.

Although the style of Ennius is rugged and harsh when compared with the flowing numbers of Virgil and Horace, the old Latin was indebted to him for an advance in copiousness and a marked improvement in its grammatical forms.

PLAUTUS.

254-184 B.C.

T. Maccius Plautus was a native of Sársina in Umbria, and, as may be seen by the date of his birth, a contemporary of the poet Ennius. He was of humble birth, and his first occupation in Rome is said to have been that of stage carpenter to a theatrical company. It is even asserted, but without sufficient proof, that he was at one time reduced to the necessity of earning his bread by grinding in a mill—a species of labor reserved for the punishment of refractory slaves.

Plautus began to write for the stage 224 B.C., and continued in the enjoyment of popular favor during

the remainder of his life, a period of forty years. The broad humor of his dialogue and the coarseness which is his most serious fault, may be attributed in part to the influence of vulgar associations, but more, perhaps, to the taste of those for whom he wrote. Apart from these defects, Plautus composed in the purest Latin, and contributed much to give the language the ease and flexibility necessary to familiar dialogue. With one exception, the plays of Plautus are taken from Greek originals. He makes no attempt to represent the national characteristics of any of his personages, and all, whether Athenians, Asiatics, or Carthaginians, are really of one common type and one country. We will proceed to speak of the leading peculiarities of these plays, and our remarks will apply, with little variation, to the works of Terence.

The Romans had, like the Greeks, a regular system of comic masks and costumes, and these were so well understood that the character which an actor was about to support was declared by his dress before he had begun to speak. As the Greeks led an outdoor life, the action of the comedy was supposed to take place in the open air; the scene of the dramas in question is usually a street, or a place where three or four streets meet. This was sometimes convenient, as two groups of speakers might be in full view of the audience, and yet be out of sight of each other. There was something incongruous, however, in the idea of people coming out of their houses to contrive plots, and communicate their most private affairs in the open street. The stage was usually of vast dimensions.

The personages of the New Comedy were somewhat limited, being generally the members of two or more neighboring families. They lack the variety

created by difference of rank ; all are of the burgher class—more or less wealthy. The range of characters is not extensive. The fathers are of two types, either stern and tyrannical, or easy and indulgent. The sons are gay young men, generous and good-natured, sometimes squandering the parental substance in not the most creditable manner. In their difficulties, which make up the plot of the drama, they are always aided by a clever slave, whose ready wit and ingenious contrivances constitute the chief comic element of the play. In practical ability they are generally far superior to their masters, and this was probably a correct representation of an ordinary state of things. We sometimes find the slave as the confidential friend of the master, sometimes, as in “*The Three Pieces of Silver*,” sustaining the failing fortune of the family.

The most singular feature of the dramas in question is the position of the heroine, who, more retiring than the model young lady of former times, is neither seen nor heard. This was a necessary consequence of the seclusion of Greek women. The action of the play is invariably in the street, where it would be considered an impropriety for a young lady to appear. The female characters consist, therefore, of slaves, nurses, and sometimes women whose part in the drama might well be dispensed with. The comedies, like those of our own day, generally end in marriage ; but the audience could hardly be expected to take much interest in a bride who remains invisible at the close as during the action of the piece.

The mother of the heroine is equally withdrawn from public view. We hear of her from the husband, who speaks, sometimes with moderate praise, more frequently in terms which augur little of the felicity

of their inner life. In the "Mother-in-law" of Terence we have the following strong expression :

" Oh heaven and earth, what animals are women !
 What a conspiracy between them all
 To do or not, to hate or love alike !
 No one but has the sex so strong within her,
 She differs nothing from the rest. Step-mothers
 All hate their step-daughters ; and every wife
 Studies alike to contradict her husband.
 The same perverseness running through them all,
 Each seems trained up in the same school of mischief ;
 And of that school, if any such there be,
 My wife, I think, is schoolmistress."

Again, when a prodigal son promises amendment, the father proposes that he should settle in life :

" FATHER.—If you'll reform, my old friend Charicles
 Here offers you his daughter, a good girl.
 Say—will you marry her ?

SON (*eagerly*).—I will, dear father—and any one else you wish.

FATHER.—Nay, one's enough—though I *am* angry with ye,
 I'll not inflict a double chastisement.
 That were too hard.

FRIEND (*laughing*).—Nay, scarcely for *his* sins
 A hundred wives at once would serve him right."

Plautus on this point follows Menander, of whom we have the following fragment :

" Needs must that in a wife we gain an evil.
 Happy is he who therein gains the least."

This is the Greek rather than the Roman view of marriage, but it is perhaps the one best suited to the purpose of comedy.

With regard to plot there is a peculiarity to be remarked in these dramas. In a modern play or novel the difficulties are sometimes removed by the timely discovery that the heroine of humble estate is

in reality of high parentage, having been changed at nurse, lost, or stolen, as the invention of the author may serve. In Greek comedy this denouement occurs constantly ; there being little variation except in the mode by which the parents of the heroine are discovered. The circumstances of the time rendered such events less improbable than in our own day. Piracy and the slave trade were professions which went hand in hand. The pirate captain who made a descent upon a Greek coast or island might, without fear, dispose of the captives and other booty at the first convenient port. Parents, also, not unfrequently sold or exposed their children. In the latter case a sort of superstition obliged them to place on the person of the child some article of value, generally a jewel. By means of this the recognition is sometimes brought about.

In many plays, therefore, the interest depends upon an attachment formed by the son of a wealthy citizen for an humble maiden, sometimes even a slave of supposed foreign extraction. Then, when the proper time comes, a casket of toys, a jewel, or the arrival of a reliable witness, leads to a happy discovery; the maiden is free-born, of Athenian parentage ; all parties consent, and the audience rejoice in the happiness of the unseen bride.

Besides the characters already mentioned, we have the sycophant, who stirs up difficulties and law-suits, and the parasite, who flatters with no worse intention than that of obtaining a good dinner, and whom the cook counts for eight in making his calculations for the repast.

There is occasionally introduced an amusing personage, the gasconading soldier, who boasts largely

of his exploits abroad, but makes a very poor figure when any emergency arises at home. The following is from the *Miles Gloriosus* (Braggadocio). Artotrogus, the sycophant, would persuade his patron that if his prowess renders him a subject of terror to one sex, he is no less than an object of admiration to the other:

“ARTOTROGUS.—You saw those girls that stopped me yesterday?

PYRGOPOLINICES.—What did they say?

ART.—Why, when you passed, they asked me—
‘What, is the great Achilles here?’ I answered,
‘No; it’s his brother.’ Then says t’other one—
‘Troth, he *is* handsome! What a noble man!
What splendid hair!’

PYRG.— Now, did they *really* say so?

ART.—They did indeed, and begged me, both of them,
To make you take a walk again to-day,
That they might get another sight of you.

PYRG. (*sighing complacently*).—’Tis a great nuisance being
so *very* handsome!”

We would quote in this connection a scene between similar characters in the “Ethiopian Slave” of Terence. Thraso, the boastful captain, wishes to know how a certain fair lady had received his present:

“THRASO.—I say—was Thais very much obliged?

GNATHO.—Immensely.

THRA.— She was really pleased, you think?

GNA.—Not with the gift so much as that you gave it;
’Tis that she’s proud of.

THRA.— I’ve a happy way—
I don’t know how—but everything I do
Is well received.

GNA.— I’ve noticed it myself.

THRA.—Yes. Even the king himself, after an action,
Would always thank me in person. ’Twas a thing
He never did to others.

GNA.— Well, with gifts like yours,
A man gets double credit, while poor souls
Like us work hard, with nobody to thank us.

THRA.—Egad, you have it!

GNA.— Ah! no doubt his majesty

Had his eye on you always.

THRA.— Well—he had.

I may tell *you*—I was in all his secrets—

Had the whole army under me, in fact.

GNA. (*with deep interest*).—No—really!

THRA.— Yes. And then, when he was tired
Of seeing people, or grew sick of business,
And wanted to unbend him, as it were—
You understand?

GNA.— I know—something, you mean,
In what we call the free-and-easy line?

THRA.—Just so—he'd ask me to a quiet dinner.

GNA.—Indeed! his majesty showed fine discernment.

THRA.—That's just the man he is—one in a thousand—
There are few like him.

GNA. (*aside*).—*Very few I fancy,*
If he could stand *your* company."

A subordinate part is often taken by the waiting-maid, a young slave, pert and forward, or the old nurse, garrulous, but faithful and affectionate.

Lastly there appears, at times, upon the stage the odious slave-dealer, whose rôle is a serious blot upon the Greek and Roman comedy.

The plays of Plautus were generally introduced by a prologue which gave the audience some idea of the comedy about to be performed. It contained frequently familiar appeals to the audience, and these give us some idea of the material of which it was composed. At one time mothers are requested for the sake of all parties to leave their babies at home; again the women are reminded that their husbands have come to enjoy the play, which they can scarcely do if they keep up a constant chattering.

"The Captives" is the best if not the most amusing of the comedies of Plautus. The interest turns upon

the fidelity of a slave who exposes himself to danger and ill-treatment by personating his young master, and remaining a captive in his place. The master, supposed to be the slave, returns to his own country to seek a ransom. In the following passage the disguised slave appeals to his new master, Hegio, for generous treatment. The son of Hegio is also a captive, and he has purchased the prisoners in the hope of effecting an exchange.

“As free a man as was your son, till now,
Was I ; like him, the hapless chance of war
Robbed me of liberty ; he stands a slave
Among my people, even as here I stand
Fettered before you. ‘There is One in heaven,
Be sure of it, who sees and knows all things
That all men do. As you shall deal with me,
So will He deal with him. He will show grace
To him who showeth grace ; He will repay
Evil for evil. (HEGIO *appears moved*.) Weep you for your
son ?
So in my home my father weeps for me.”

The deceit is soon discovered, and Hegio, indignant at the escape of the young nobleman by whom he hoped to ransom his son, loads Tyndarus with chains and condemns him to cruel punishment in the stone quarries. Tyndarus appeals in vain to Hegio’s sense of justice :

“TYN.—Think now, if any slave who called you master
Had done this for your son, how you had thanked him !
Would you have grudged him liberty, or no ?
Would you have loved him above all the rest ?
Nay—answer me.

HEG.—I grant it.

TYN.— Oh why then
Are you thus wroth with me for doing likewise ?
HEG.—Your faith with him was treachery to me.

TYN.—What! Would you ask that one brief night and day
Should give you claim on a poor captive's service
Just fallen within your power to cancel his
With whom I lived and whom I loved from childhood?
HEG.—Then seek your thanks from him. Lead him away."

As Tyndarus is dragged from the stage he exclaims:

"Well—death will come—thy threats can reach no further,
And though I linger to a long old age,
Life's span of suffering is but brief. Farewell.
I might find plea to curse thee—but—farewell."

Philócrates, the young master, is not unworthy of such fidelity. He returns to release Tyndarus accompanied by the son of Hegio, whom he brings as a ransom. The joy of the father is great; but he is overwhelmed with remorse when he discovers that the generous slave, whom he had treated so harshly, is no other than his youngest son, who had been stolen from him in infancy. The generous youth consoles his conscience-stricken parent, and with this happy denouement the play closes.

Probability was not so much regarded in these plays as comic situations. In the "Haunted House," Philolaches, a young Athenian, whose father has gone on a trading voyage to Egypt, and who has squandered a great part of his substance, is sitting at supper with his friends. All is proceeding merrily, when Tranio, a confidential slave, enters with the news that the father of Philólaches has just landed, and will be with them in a few minutes. The consternation of the son may be imagined. He orders the supper to be cleared away, and dismisses his friends without wasting any time upon apologies. They understand the situation, and make haste to leave, all but one, Callidámates, who is half asleep and quite incapable of

comprehending what has taken place. When Philolaches, wild with impatience, informs him that his father has returned, Callidamates only hopes that he is very well, and settles himself to sleep again. Being roused and seeing the vexation of his host, he tells him that if he does not want his father—why—send him back again, and finally offers to fight him.

Tranio, seeing the altercation prolonged, hurries to meet Theuropides, the returning father, first warning his young master on no account to open the house-door, which must be locked and bolted fast. The merchant meanwhile knocks at his own door; receiving no answer, he looks around and perceives Tranio. The slave comes forward, apparently in great terror, and begs him to desist from any attempt to enter the house, which is haunted by the spirit of a guest murdered by the former proprietor. The sights and sounds are terrible—his young master had to leave to save his life.

The merchant pays little attention to the story, and makes another assault upon the door. A noise is heard within. Upon this Tranio appears beside himself with fright, and apostrophizes the ghost, begging for mercy, assuring the goblin that it was not *he* who knocked. The merchant is at length terrified, and departs, inquiring as to where his son is to be found. Tranio declares that he has bought another house, naming at a venture that of Simo, a wealthy citizen. While Theuropides is on his way thither, Tranio runs before and informs Simo that his master, just returned, is about to build a house, and wishes to visit his, which he understands to be a model of elegance and convenience. Simo is flattered, and begs the merchant to go through the house as if it were his own, etc. So

the play proceeds, the slave's ingenuity being constantly taxed to invent new falsehoods.

The deception is at length discovered, and Tranio takes sanctuary at the family altar. From this vantage-ground he argues with his master, who consents rather unwillingly to forgive his prodigal son; for Tranio there is to be no such mercy, and two stout slaves stand ready to administer the castigation he has so well deserved. The assurance of Tranio does not desert him even in this emergency. He reminds his master that his own part in the transaction will hardly redound to his credit—it will be wiser to forgive him also, otherwise the story may get abroad and the whole affair be worked into a plot for the next comedy.

The *Aulularia*, or “Pot of Gold,” is an amusing play, and suggested to Molière the plot of *L'Avare*, his best comedy.

Space will not permit us to dwell longer upon the dramas of Plautus. We will only observe that if the story and general plan is borrowed, there is a spirit and freshness in the dialogue which is all his own. Many plays bear witness to a state of morals low indeed, and it is difficult to select an extract of any length which is at the same time interesting and free from the taint of heathen corruption.

TERENCE.

Publius Terentius *Afer* was a slave in the family of a Roman senator, P. T. Lucānus. The place of his birth is uncertain, but it is conjectured from his cognomen, *Afer*, that he was a Carthaginian.* Terence

* It was customary among the Romans to distinguish household slaves by names denoting their race or country.

evidently enjoyed in the house of his Roman master every opportunity for the cultivation of his natural gifts. It is believed also that he obtained his freedom at a very early age.

The first work of the young dramatist was the *Maid of Andros*. It is considered the most interesting, and was sufficient to establish his reputation as an author. This comedy was also the means of introducing Terence to the familiar society of Scipio, Lælius, and others among the great Roman nobility. The ladies of the family of Lælius were cultivated and even learned women. Of Lælia, the oldest daughter, her son-in-law, Crassus the orator, writes, "that by her eloquence, and the purity with which she spoke the Latin language, her friends were reminded of the dialogues of Nævius and Plautus." We are assured also that her pronunciation lent sweetness and grace to a dialect which still retained somewhat of its original harshness.

Such intercourse was not without its effect, and if the dialogues of Terence are free from that coarseness which is reprobated in Plautus, we must attribute this superiority to the habits of refined society. In point of actual morality there is little to choose between the two dramatists. Terence indeed reprobates vice, but he does so, not because of its guilt, but as being inconsistent with the refinement of a cultivated mind, with the habits and feelings of a gentleman. While, however, the plays of this writer bear witness to the corruption of heathen society, and exhibit much that would be wholly inadmissible upon the modern stage, it is probable that he was regarded by his contemporaries as being to some extent a teacher of morality.

Of the six dramas left by Terence it will not be necessary to speak in detail ; some brief extracts have been already given. We would only remark that if he excels Plautus in certain respects, he is inferior to him in spirit, originality, and that *vis comica* which is so important an element in this species of composition.

TITUS LUCRETIVS CARUS.

91-52 B.C.

Of the life of this great poet but little is known. He was a native of Italy ; some have supposed that he studied at Athens, but of this there does not seem any sufficient proof. He died by his own hand in the forty-fourth year of his age.

Lucretius is known to us by a poem, in six books, entitled “*De Rerum Natura* ;” it is a philosophic work, containing a full exposition of the system of Epicurus. The poet dedicates his labors to Memmius, his friend and patron, of whom he thus speaks in the opening passage, an invocation to Venus :

“ Be thou my aid, my tuneful song inspire,
And kindle with thy own productive fire ;
While all thy province, Nature, I survey,
And sing to Memmius an immortal lay
Of heaven and earth, and everywhere thy wondrous
power display :
To Memmius, under thy sweet influence born,
Whom thou with all thy gifts and graces dost adorn.
The rather, then, assist my Muse and me,
Infusing verses worthy him and thee.”

Of the philosophy of Lucretius, there can be, among Christians, but one opinion. He denies the existence of Providence and the immortality of the soul, and argues against the fear of death upon the ground that

it puts a term equally to our pains and to our pleasures, and that what ceases to exist must cease to suffer.

Lucretius denounces, with just indignation, the superstitions and the deities of the pagan world, but he can only offer in their stead a system of cold and heartless unbelief. Dryden attributes to this the inequalities of the great poem of Lucretius. He says :

“He was bent on making Memmius a materialist, and teaching him to defy an invisible power. In short, he was so much an atheist that he sometimes forgot to be a poet.”

Lucretius maintains with Epicurus that the natural world, with its varied phenomena, is the result of a chance combination of atoms, and that these elementary particles are self-existing and eternal. Well may Cicero exclaim at the arrogant folly of one who, priding himself upon his understanding, can yet suppose that the mighty order of the universe, which by the utmost exertion of his own reason he can but imperfectly comprehend, was organized and moved without any reason at all.

Lucretius is hardly true to his own barren theories. Having banished the idea of God, he invests nature with a sort of personality, and gives to the sun, stars, etc., attributes which belong only to intelligent powers. Much of this may be poetical license, but there is sufficient earnestness to prove that the heart of the poet, unsatisfied by his own doctrines, partook of the common feelings of our nature, and yearned for the support and comfort of a personal deity. This intimate principle of our being is also acknowledged in the following lines, in which the terrors of a guilty conscience are well described :

“ And oh ! how deep our shuddering spirits feel
A dread of heaven through every member steal,
When the strong lightning strikes the blasted ground,
And thunder rolls the murmuring clouds around.
Shake not the nations ? And the monarch's nod,
Bows it not low before the present God,
Lest for foul deeds, or haughty words, be sent
His hurried hour of awful punishment ? ”

The poem closes with a description of the plague at Athens. It is powerfully written, but presents only terrible and revolting images, unrelieved by any traits of generosity or devotedness which might divert the mind from the loathsome details of physical suffering and disease. When the subject is more happily chosen the poem abounds in passages which can hardly be excelled either for beauty or sublimity.

ORIGIN OF MUSIC.

“ And from the liquid warblings of the birds
Learned they their first rude notes, ere music yet
To the rapt ear had tuned the measured verse ;
And Zephyr, whisp'ring through the hollow reeds,
Taught the first swains the hollow reeds to sound :
Whence woke they soon those tender trembling tones
Which the sweet pipe, when by the fingers pressed
Pours o'er the hills, the vales, and woodlands wild,
Haunts of lone shepherds, and the rural gods.
So growing time points, ceaseless, something new,
And human skill evolves it into day.
Thus soothed they every care, with music, thus
Closed every meal, for rests the bosom then.
And oft they threw them on the velvet grass,
Near gliding streams, by shadowy trees o'erarched,
And void of costly wealth found still the means
To gladden life. But chief when genial Spring
Led forth her laughing train, and the young Year
Painted the meads with roseate flowers profuse—
Then mirth, and wit, and wiles, and frolic, chief,
Flowed from the heart ; for then the rustic Muse
Warmest inspired them ; then joyous sport

Taught round their heads, their shoulders, taught to twine
 Foliage, and flowers, and garlands richly dight ;
 To loose, innum'rous time their limbs to move,
 And beat, with sturdy foot, maternal earth ;
 While many a smile and many a laughter loud,
 Told all was new, and wond'rous much esteemed.
 Thus wakeful lived they, cheating of its rest
 The drowsy midnight ; with the jocund dance
 Mixing gay converse, madrigals, and strains
 Run o'er the reeds with broad recumbent lip ;
 As, wakeful still, our revellers through night
 Lead on their defter dance to time precise ;
 Yet cull not costlier sweets, with all their art,
 Than the rude offspring earth in woodlands bore."

—MASON GOOD.

IN PRAISE OF PHILOSOPHY.

" 'Tis pleasant, safely to behold from shore
 The rolling ship and hear the tempest roar ;
 Not that another's pain is our delight ;
 But pains unfelt produce the pleasing sight.
 'Tis pleasant also to behold from far
 The moving legions mingled in the war ;
 But much more sweet thy laboring steps to guide
 To virtue's heights, with wisdom well supplied,
 And all the magazines of learning fortified ;
 From thence to look below on humankind,
 Bewildered in the maze of life, and blind ;
 'To see vain fools ambitiously contend
 For wit and power ; their last endeavors lend
 To outshine each other, waste their time and health
 In search of honor, and pursuit of wealth.
 O wretched man ! in what a mist of life,
 Enclosed with dangers, and with noisy strife,
 He spends his little span ; and overfeeds
 His crammed desires with more than nature needs !
 For nature wisely stints our appetite,
 And craves no more than undisturbed delight,
 Which minds unmixed with cares and fears obtain ;
 A soul serene, a body void of pain.
 So little this corporeal frame requires,
 So bounded are our natural desires,

That, wanting all, and setting pain aside,
 With bare privation sense is satisfied.
 If golden sconces hang not on the walls,
 To light the courtly suppers and the balls ;
 If the proud palace shines not with the state
 Of burnished bowls, and of reflected plate ;
 If well-tuned harps, nor the more pleasing sound
 Of voices, from the vaulted roofs rebound ;
 Yet on the grass, beneath a poplar shade,
 By the cool stream our careless limbs are laid ;
 With cheaper pleasures innocently blessed,
 When the warm spring in gaudy flowers is dressed.
 Nor will the raging fever's fire abate
 With golden canopies and beds of state ;
 But the poor patient will as soon be found
 On the hard mattress, or the mother ground.
 Then, since our bodies are not eased the more
 By birth, or power, or fortune's wealthy store,
 'Tis plain, these useless toys of every kind
 As little can relieve the laboring mind."

—DRYDEN.

CORNELIUS NEPOS.

FLOURISHED ABOUT 50 B.C.

This writer lived during the latter years of the Republic and during the earlier portion of the reign of Augustus. We know nothing with certainty regarding his life, except that he was the contemporary and friend of Cicero, Pomponius Atticus, and Catúllus.

Of many works written by Cornelius Nepos we have only remaining his "Lives of Illustrious Men." Notwithstanding many faults and inaccuracies, these biographies are highly esteemed on account of the information which they afford. The author wrote in the last days of Roman liberty, and he loses no opportunity of rousing the ancient spirit of patriotism in the breasts of his already degenerate countrymen.

OF THE EARLY TRAINING OF EPAMINONDAS.

“Epaminondas was the son of Polynnis, a Theban of an honorable family. Though left poor by his ancestors, he was so well educated that no Theban was more so ; for he was taught to play upon the harp, and to sing to the sound of its strings, by Dionysius ; to play on the flutes by Olympiodorus ; and to dance by Calliphron. For his instructor in philosophy he had Lysis of Tarentum, a Pythagorean, to whom he was so devoted that, young as he was, he preferred the society of a grave and austere old man before that of all those of his own age ; nor did he part with him until he so far excelled his fellow-students in learning, that it might easily be perceived he would in like manner excel them all in other pursuits. After he grew up, and began to apply himself to gymnastic exercises, he studied not so much to increase the strength, as the agility, of his body ; for he thought that strength suited the purposes of wrestlers, but that agility conduced to excellence in war. He used to exercise himself very much, therefore, in running and wrestling as long as he could grapple, and contend standing, with his adversary. But he spent most of his labor on martial exercises.

To the strength of body thus acquired were added many good qualities of the mind ; for he was modest, prudent, grave, wisely availing himself of opportunities, skilled in war, brave in action, and possessed of remarkable courage ; he was so great a lover of truth, that he would not tell a falsehood even in jest. He was also master of his passions, gentle in disposition, and patient to a wonderful degree, submitting to wrong, not only from the people, but from his own friends ; he was a remarkable keeper of secrets, a quality which is sometimes not less serviceable than to speak eloquently ; and he was an attentive listener to others, because he thought that by this means knowledge was most easily acquired. Whenever he came into a company, therefore, in which a discussion was going on concerning government, or a conversation was being held on any point of philosophy, he never went away till the discourse was brought to its conclusion.”

CICERO. *(Tully)*

106-43 B.C.

Marcus Tullius Cicero was a native of Arpinum, a small town of Latium, on the banks of the Liris. His family, although ancient and of equestrian rank, was not accounted noble, none of its members having as yet held any high office in the state. Cicero was educated at Rome, and enjoyed all the advantages which the capital afforded, becoming thoroughly acquainted, not only with the language and the authors of his own country, but with the richer treasures of Greek literature.

On receiving the toga virilis, at the age of sixteen, Cicero devoted himself to the study of rhetoric and jurisprudence, neglecting nothing which might qualify him as a successful pleader.* During some years he was a pupil of Mucius Scævola,† and was a constant guest at the house of the great lawyer. There he enjoyed an advantage which for a young man of talent cannot be too highly appreciated, the society of refined and accomplished women. The social reunions in the Scævola mansion were at the same time controlled and rendered attractive by the presence and the brilliant conversation of the ladies of that illustrious house. Mother, daughters, and granddaugh-

* The Roman advocates exercised their profession gratuitously, receiving no fees from their clients. The practice of public speaking was, however, the best training for public life; and an eloquent pleader was certain to gain the fame and popularity which was necessary to every candidate for office.

† Scævola was the surname of the house of Mucii, first distinguished by the heroism displayed by one of its members in the presence of Porsenna. Virtue and patriotism seem to have been hereditary in this illustrious family, and the preceptor of Cicero presented a type of the true Roman patrician.

ters held successively the social sceptre, and the noblest men of Rome were glad to forget graver cares in the charms of their society. The future orator was not the last to profit by such advantages.

Of the events of the public life of Cicero we can give but the briefest summary. At the age of twenty-five he pleaded his first cause, and two years later visited Athens, where he formed an intimate friendship with Pomponius Atticus. After travelling in Asia and visiting Rhodes, he returned to Rome, where he disputed the palm of eloquence with Hortensius, the most famous pleader of the time.

As soon as he had attained the legal age, Cicero was appointed quæstor, Sicily being assigned him for his province. Here he managed public affairs in such a manner as to give universal satisfaction. The provincials were equally surprised and delighted to see a governor who was guilty of no extortion, and whom none dared approach with a bribe, while the Romans appreciated the practical ability with which he regulated the supply of corn, the year being one of extreme scarcity.

The young official received so many compliments on his good management, that he began to consider himself a person of some importance. Later he enlivened one of his speeches by relating the manner in which he was undeceived. After saying, "I thought in my heart that the people of Rome must be talking of nothing else but my quæstorship," he tells how, landing at Putcoli when a great many persons were assembled at that fashionable resort, and remarking that he had just returned from his province, he found that very few remembered that he had any province, and no one knew exactly where his government was.

He was confounded, but, as he says, "I thought it best to swallow my indignation, and make as though I too had come to Puteoli for the waters." He adds:

"After I had thus found out that the people of Rome have somewhat deaf ears, but very keen eyes, I left off cogitating what people would hear about me; I took care that henceforth they should see me before them every day; I lived in their sight, I stuck close to the Forum; the porter at my gate refused no man admittance—my very sleep was never allowed to be a plea against an audience."

The moral which Cicero draws from this incident is remarkable as showing the resemblance between the public life of Rome and that of our day. In point of fact, that age which we term mediæval, with its mode of thought and its historic personages, is more truly ancient in our regard, and is divided from us by a greater interval than that which separates the nineteenth century from the age of Cicero, Pompey, and the first Cæsar.

In the year following the return of Cicero, he conducted the prosecution of Verres, who had been prætor at Syracuse. This trial, which was conducted in the public Forum,* placed Cicero at once at the head of the Roman bar. He had an opportunity of displaying all his powers, and the oration in which he exposes the crimes of Verres may be taken as a model, whether for deep pathos or lofty denuncia-

* This was an open space, occupying about five acres, between the Capitoline and Palatine hills. It was laid out by Romulus, and surrounded with porticoes, etc., by the first Tarquin. The Forum is now a waste field, strewn with ruins, and called, until lately, Campo-vaccino, or the cow-field. In the time of Cicero it was the public market of the city, and also the place where assemblies of the people were commonly held, and where men usually resorted, either to transact business, or to meet their friends and discuss the news of the day. In the Forum, also, judicial trials were conducted, ordinarily in magnificent courts called Basilica, erected for that purpose. State prosecutions, like that of Verres, were carried on in the open Forum. One part of the area was more elevated than the rest. Here was erected the rostrum, or stage for the orators, also the temporary accommodations for judges, counsel, witnesses, etc.

tion. Seeking the strongest charge against this cruel and despotic governor, he chooses the torture and crucifixion of one Gavius, a Roman citizen. After raising the indignation of his auditors to the highest pitch, he exclaims :

“ It is a crime to put a citizen of Rome in bonds ; it is an atrocity to scourge him ; to put him to death is well-nigh parricide ; what shall I say it is to crucify him ? Language has no word by which I may designate such an enormity.”

Cicero
Cicero attained, at length, the summit of his ambition, being elected Consul 63 B.C. He rendered his term of office forever memorable by crushing the conspiracy of Catiline. His speeches upon this occasion are among the highest efforts of his genius. The career of Catiline, so extraordinary in all its circumstances, is perhaps best explained by the view which Cicero takes of the character of the great conspirator.

“ I believe that there never lived on earth such a monster of inconsistency—such a compound of opposite tastes and passions brought into conflict with each other. Who at one time was a greater favorite with our most illustrious men ? Who was a closer intimate with our very basest ? Who could be more greedy of money than he was ? Who could lavish it more profusely ? There were these marvellous qualities of the man,—he made friends so universally, he obtained them by his obliging ways, he was ready to share what he had with them all, to help them at their need with his money, his influence, his personal exertions, not stopping short of the most audacious crime, if there was need of it. He could change his very nature, and rule himself by circumstances, and turn and bend in any direction. He lived soberly with the serious, he was a boon companion with the gay ; grave with the elders, merry with the young, reckless among the desperate, profligate with the depraved. With a nature so complex and many-sided, he not only collected round him wicked and desperate characters from all quarters of the world, but he also attracted many brave and good men by his simulation of virtue. It would have been im-

possible for him to have organized that atrocious attack upon the Commonwealth, unless that fierce outgrowth of depraved passions had rested on some under-stratum of agreeable qualities and powers of endurance !” *

After these events, Cicero received the title of *Pater Patriæ*, Father of his Country, and even provincial cities vied with one another in their expressions of gratitude. If his services were great, by none were they more highly appreciated than by himself, and it is surprising to find personal vanity united with so much real greatness. Its free expression was due, in great part, to the candor and simplicity of his character. Patriotism was in Cicero a ruling passion which ennobled the egotism of his triumph. He rejoiced, not alone that Rome was saved, but that he had been the instrument of deliverance to the country he so dearly loved. The selfish and guilty pride of men like Pompey and Cæsar may have a sort of dignity in its reticence, but is more really ignoble than was the frank self-gratulation of this true-hearted Roman.

The consulate of Cicero was followed by the return of Pompey and the formation of the first Triumvirate. Four years passed, in which the great orator lived partially retired from public life, and, as a matter of necessity, a spectator only of the political changes at Rome. He spent much of his time in the country, sometimes at his Tusculan villa, which it was his delight to adorn ; sometimes at *Formiæ*, where he had a charming residence ; more rarely at *Arpinum*, where he transformed the simple grange in which his ancestors had dwelt into a mansion more suited to his reputation and fortune. Of the sources whence this

* With the exception of the two last extracts the translations in this article are by
Rev. W. A. Collins.

last was derived we know little, but the character of Cicero is too well established to admit of any injurious suspicion. Happy in his domestic relations, and surrounded everywhere by a circle of sincere and devoted friends, he enjoyed all the pleasures of fame, friendship, and congenial literary occupation ; but these many ties were destined to be rudely broken.

Cicero had drawn upon himself the enmity of Clodius, one of the worst among the bad men whose crimes were working the ruin of the Republic. The occasion was as follows. The rites of the Bona Dea, which it was unlawful for a man to witness, were being celebrated at the house of Cæsar, his wife Pompeia presiding. Clodius intruded upon the mysteries disguised in female attire, and the act created intense excitement. There was no proof of any connivance on the part of Pompeia, but Cæsar divorced her forthwith, saying : “ The wife of Cæsar must not even be suspected.” Clodius was known to be guilty of far graver crimes, but the act of profanation was supposed to compromise the entire commonwealth, and he was immediately brought to trial. Hired witnesses were brought forward by the accused to prove his presence at Amiternum on the night in question, but Cicero destroyed this defence by testifying that he had spoken with Clodius in Rome on that same evening. Although Clodius obtained an acquittal, his guilt was fully established, and he never forgave Cicero for the part he had taken in the trial.

Determined on revenge, Clodius caused himself to be adopted into a plebeian family ; being thus qualified, he was elected Tribune of the people. He then proposed an act for the outlawry of any one who had caused a Roman citizen to be put to death without

trial. Every one understood that this was aimed against Cicero. Being invested by the Senate with full powers, he had caused several of the chief accomplices of Catiline to be executed without any of the usual forms. The Senate and the patrician class generally did what they could to support the ex-consul. The latter, according to the custom of accused persons, put on mourning, the senators did the same, and Cicero appeared in public, escorted by twenty thousand young men of the best families in Rome, all wearing badges of mourning to testify their respect and sympathy. These demonstrations were altogether fruitless. The orator had given offence to Cæsar, and Pompey, who should have been his friend, refused to aid him in his trouble. Cicero anticipated the sentence which impended, and went into banishment.

During his exile this great man exhibited the most deplorable weakness. Nothing could console him for his enforced withdrawal from the public life of Rome, and for the loss of the popular applause which had become to him as the breath of life. His unmanly lamentations, while they grieved his friends, excited the derision of his enemies, and furnished later, grounds for the saying that he met no calamity like a man except his death.

We cannot dwell here upon the circumstances which led to Cicero's recall. His journey to the capital was a continued triumph; the different cities vied with one another in doing him honor, and he could truly say that he had been "carried back to Rome on the shoulders of Italy." It is impossible not to sympathize with his feelings of honest exultation, and if he had never boasted on a less occasion, his vanity might well be excused. He says :

"That single day was to me like immortality, when I returned to my own city, and saw the Senate and the people of all ranks come forth to greet me."

Cicero now obtained what had long been the object of his ambition, a seat in the college of Augurs. About this period he conducted the defence of Milo, who had killed Clodius. His speeches are much admired, but the cause was weak, and Milo considered it prudent to go into voluntary exile.

Shortly after Cicero was named, much against his will, to the government of Cilicia, and here, as in Sicily, he displayed the integrity and love of justice which formed the brightest points of his character. He conducted also a military expedition with such distinguished success that he was saluted by his soldiers with the title of Imperator. He returned to Rome 51 B.C., and we find him in the troubles which followed, taking part with Pompey, although he entertained but little hope of the success of his cause. After the battle of Pharsalia, Cicero presented himself before Cæsar, who generously forgave the part which he had taken in the recent struggle.

We must now speak of the only act which has left a stain on the private character of the great Roman: this was the divorce of his wife Terentia, with whom he had lived on terms of affection during a period of thirty years. It is alleged that she was a woman of imperious temper, and that she had contributed to ruin her husband by the mismanagement of his affairs, and by her extravagance. It is to be feared, however, that these late accusations were only pretexts, and Cicero made, perhaps, her best defence by marrying, immediately after, a young lady named Publilia, his own ward, and a wealthy heiress. But one palliation

can be offered—the already relaxed state of morals, and the frequency and facility of divorce ; another point in which we remark a painful resemblance to the condition of society in our own day. This second union was unhappy, and ended also in divorce. It is said that Cicero was driven to this step by the undiminished joy which Publilia manifested at the death of her young step-daughter. Tullia had been from her earliest years singularly dear to her father. In his letters to Atticus her name constantly appears, generally in the familiar diminutive Tulliola. As a child, she was the darling of her father's heart, in later years her lively intelligence and literary tastes rendered her a congenial companion. Her death completed the measure of his domestic afflictions ; depriving him, according to his own expression, of the only solace against the misfortunes of his public life. On this occasion he wrote his treatise *On Consolation*.

The closing events of the life of this great man may be briefly enumerated. After the death of Cæsar, he endeavored to effect an accommodation between Antony and the Senate. Antony, however, aimed at nothing less than the dictatorship ; he left Rome, and Cicero exposed his measures, and warned the Romans of his character and designs, in a series of orations known as the *Twelve Philippics*. The second of these is said to have cost the orator his life, and he seems to have considered the probability of such a result. He says :

“But do you look to yourself. I will tell you how it stands with me. I defended the Commonwealth when I was young—I will not desert it now that I am old. I despised the swords of Catiline—I am not likely to tremble before

yours. If twenty years ago, I declared in this house that death could never be said to come before its time to a man who had been Consul of Rome, with how much more truth, at my age, may I say it now! To me, indeed, death may well be a thing to be even desired, when I have done what I have done, and reaped the honors I have reaped."

The meeting of the second Triumvirate, and the odious treaty by which each member sacrificed a friend that he might be indulged in some private vengeance, is well known. In this manner Lepidus gave up a brother, Antony an uncle, and Octavius, with but little hesitation, consented to the death of Cicero.

The latter, informed of his danger, refused at first to seek safety in flight. He yielded, at length, to the solicitations of his friends, but when overtaken by the soldiers sent in pursuit, he would not permit the attendants to make any resistance. Looking out from his litter, he recognized in the officer who led the band a man whom he had once defended on a capital charge. Without condescending to a word of reproach, Cicero calmly presented his head to a centurion, saying: "Strike, soldier, if you understand your trade!" The attendants burst into lamentations, and even the rough legionaries covered their faces while their officer performed the part of an executioner.

The head and hands of the murdered patriot were carried to Antony, who, in his joy, paid the soldiers ten times the promised reward. By his order the bloody trophy was displayed over the rostrum. The spectacle excited universal horror, and men wept aloud as they saw the gray hair stained with gore, and the pallid countenance of the great Roman, which seemed to look in death upon the Forum which had so often resounded to his matchless eloquence.

Of all the crimes committed during this disastrous period, none excited more general reprobation, and the participation of Octavius has left a stain upon his memory which the glories of the Augustan rule are powerless to efface.

The works of Cicero may be classed as orations, rhetorical and philosophical works, political essays, and letters. He is said to have composed about eighty orations, of which fifty have been wholly or in part preserved. Of his rhetorical works, that entitled *De Oratore* is the most esteemed. Of the eloquence of Cicero it is hardly necessary to speak, as the idea is associated with his very name. The Latin language was brought by him to its highest perfection, acquiring a softness and flexibility which it had hitherto lacked. The Romans, less fitted than were the Greeks to appreciate the nicer beauties of style, considered more the matter than the manner of a discourse. They were not, however, insensible to harmony of language, and the noble sentiments of the orator roused a deeper enthusiasm when enhanced by the cadence of the full and rounded period.

If, at times, the orations of Cicero appear too florid for our taste, we must remember that he adapted his discourse to his hearers. No efforts have ever been crowned with more success; never have greater results followed the words of any speaker. By one burst of indignant eloquence, Catiline was driven from the Senate and the city—a conspiracy was changed into a war, and the Republic was saved. Of the six orations against Verres, but one was spoken, when the guilty governor sought safety in voluntary exile. There is no doubt but that the fall of Antony was due in a great measure to the exposure of his

public and private crimes in the celebrated *Philippics*. Other instances might be cited, but we have said enough for our present purpose.

Of Cicero's letters there are more than eight hundred extant. Of these, nearly four hundred are addressed to his friend Pomponius Atticus, to whom he communicates the current news of Rome, with his own observations on men and events. It is hard to overestimate the value of these letters, written by such a man, and extending over a quarter of a century of the most important period of Roman history. They throw light on much that would otherwise be obscure, and it is interesting to see the great men of other times in their every-day life and their hours of social intercourse.

In a letter from his country house near Puteoli, Cicero describes a visit from Julius Cæsar, already dictator. He begins :

"To think that I should have had such a tremendous visitor ! But never mind ; for all went off very pleasantly."

Then, after describing in detail the preparations which he was obliged to make, borrowing a troop of soldiers to guard the house during Cæsar's visit ; the tables arranged for guests of different ranks, etc., he concludes :

"Well, no need to make a long story ; we found we were both 'flesh and blood.' Still he is not the kind of guest to whom you would say—'Now do, pray, take us in your way, on your return.' Once is enough. We had no conversation on business, but a good deal of literary talk. In short he seemed to be much pleased, and to enjoy himself. He said he should stay one day at Puteoli, and another at Baïæ."

After a letter full of gay banter to a friend, who, on plea of ill-health, had ceased to give dinners, or to accept invitations, Cicero speaks in a graver strain :

"But do not imagine, as you love me, that because I write jestingly I have thrown off all anxiety about public affairs. Be assured, my dear Pætus, that I seek nothing, and care for nothing, night or day, but how my country may be kept safe and free. I omit no opportunity of advising, planning, or acting. I feel in my heart that if in securing this I have to lay down my life, I shall have ended it well and honorably."

Letters from the country have their own peculiar charm. Cicero, besides being a great man, was a delightful talker, and he complains in some of his earlier epistles of the manner in which his time was taken up by morning visitors. As his country neighbors were considerate enough to leave at ten or eleven, the case does not really seem so hard; only, one is inclined to wonder at what hour etiquette permitted morning calls to begin.

The relics of Cicero's family correspondence show, as nothing else could do, his genuine kindness of heart. Some of these are addressed to Tiro, a servant and secretary, afterwards a freedman and the biographer of his noble master. The following is from a letter addressed to him by Cicero after his return from Cilicia. Tiro had been left at Patræ on account of illness, and Cicero tells him how much he has missed him. He concludes:

"Mind this, my good Tiro, if you love me—let neither Mario's visit nor this letter hurry you. By doing what is best for your own health, you will be best obeying my directions. Consider these points with your usual good sense. I miss you very much; but then I love you, and my affection makes me wish to see you well, just as my want of you makes me long to see you as soon as possible. But the first point is the most important. Above all, therefore, take care to get well; of all your innumerable services to me, this will be the most acceptable."

Another letter to Tiro is addressed in the name of the whole family :

“ Marcus Tullius Cicero, and Cicero the younger, and Terentia, and Tullia, and Brother Quintus, and Quintus' son, to Tiro send greeting.”

The letters of Cicero to his brother Quintus* show a warmth of family affection not usually attributed to the Roman character. In answer to his brother, who fears lest his letters may be troublesome, he says, after exclaiming indignantly at such a supposition :

“ I swear, that no moon-stricken rhymester ever reads his own last poem with more delight than I do what you write to me about matters public or private, town or country.”

Again, how pathetic is the apology which he makes for having avoided meeting his brother at a time when he was under the first shock of his exile from Rome :

“ My brother, my brother, my brother ! Did you really fear that I was angry, because I sent off the slaves without any letter to you ? And did you even think that I was unwilling to see you ? I angry with you ! Could I possibly be angry with you ? When I miss you it is not a brother only that I miss. To me you have always been the pleasantest of companions, a son in dutiful affection, a father in counsel. What pleasure had I ever without you, or you without me ? ”

The most admirable of all the letters of Cicero are those in which he advises Quintus concerning his

* This beloved brother of Cicero was involved in his destruction. When he had resolved on flight, Quintus returned to Rome with his son to procure money for the journey. He was surprised in his house by the soldiers of Antony, and had only time to conceal himself as they entered. They seized his son, whom they put to the torture to oblige him to betray his father. This the younger Quintus refused to do, but the cries of agony which he could not repress were heard by his father, who immediately gave himself up. Upon this the young man besought the soldiers to put him to death quickly that he might not see the murder of his father. The latter preferred the same petition, and they were slaughtered together.

government at Ephesus. After describing what the conduct of an upright governor should be, he says :

“ I write thus, not to urge you so to act, but that you may congratulate yourself upon having so acted, now and heretofore.”

Notwithstanding this delicacy, it must be feared that the counsel would not have been so anxiously given had it been wholly superfluous.

Of the philosophical writings of Cicero we can only say a few words. That entitled *De Officiis*, On the Moral Duties, is among the most admirable. It was addressed to his son, then studying at Athens. We have also the *Academics*, a defence of the New Academy ; *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*, On the Ends of Good and Evil, a series of dialogues ; The *Tusculan Disputations*, which contain five separate treatises ; the *Summum Bonum*, On the Supreme Good, and several essays on different subjects. Of these *Old Age* and *Friendship* are the most admirable.

Cicero was a follower of the New Academy ; he sometimes inclines to the doctrine of the Stoics, but is always rather a seeker of truth than the partisan of any particular school. His religion was necessarily vague. He had no faith in the fables of polytheism, but, like Socrates, feared to disturb the popular belief without having anything tangible to offer in its place. He inquired reverently into the realities of things, and although troubled by the mystery of life, the great truths concerning the Deity and the immortality of the soul were firmly impressed upon his mind.

In the *Tusculan Disputations*, Cicero says ;

“ Men say they cannot conceive or comprehend what the soul can be distinct from the body. As if, forsooth, they

could comprehend what it is, when it is *in* the body—its conformation, its magnitude, or its position there To me, when I consider the nature of the soul, there is far more difficulty and obscurity in forming a conception of what the soul is while in the body,—in a dwelling where it seems so little at home,—than of what it will be when it has escaped into the free atmosphere of heaven, which seems its natural abode.”

Again he bids us imitate the swans, who with prophetic instinct die in a burst of joyous melody. In the fragment known as Scipio's Dream, we have the following :

“For all those who have preserved, or aided, or benefitted their country, there is a fixed and definite place in heaven, where they shall be happy in the enjoyment of everlasting life.”

And elsewhere :

“Yea, rather, they live who have escaped from the bonds of their flesh, as from a prison house. . . . One single day well spent, and in accordance with the precepts, were better to be chosen than an immortality of sin.”

In the essay entitled Old Age, Cicero well remarks that he is indeed miserable who is obliged to appeal to his gray hairs as his only claim to the respect of the young. “Neither hoary hairs nor wrinkles can arrogate reverence as their right. It is the life whose opening years have been honorably spent which reaps the reward of reverence at its close.” The following passage shows clearly that trust in immortality which, disturbed at times by vagueness and doubt, was nevertheless a leading principle in the philosophy of the great Roman :

“It likes me not to mourn over departing life, as many men, and men of learning, have done. Nor can I regret that I lived, since I have so lived that I may trust I was not born in vain ; and I depart out of life as out of a tem-

porary lodging, not as out of my home. For nature has given it to us as an inn to tarry at by the way, not as a place to abide in. O glorious day! when I shall set out to join that blessed company and assembly of disembodied spirits, and quit this crowd and rabble of life! For I shall go my way, not only to those great men of whom I spoke, but to my own son Cato, than whom was never better man born, nor more full of dutiful affection; whose body I laid on the funeral pile—an office he should rather have done for me. But his spirit has never left me; it still looks fondly back upon me, though it has gone assuredly into those abodes where he knew that I myself should follow.”*

We take the following from the

ESSAY ON FRIENDSHIP.

“Good gods! is there a man upon the face of the earth who would deliberately accept of all the wealth and all the affluence this world can bestow, if offered to him upon the severe terms of his being unconnected with a single mortal whom he could love, or by whom he should be beloved? This would be to lead the wretched life of a detested tyrant, who, amidst perpetual suspicions and alarms, passes his miserable days a stranger to every tender sentiment, and utterly precluded from the heartfelt satisfactions of friendship. For who can love the man he fears? or how can affection dwell with a consciousness of being feared? He may be flattered, indeed, by his followers with the specious semblance of personal attachment; but whenever he falls (and many instances there are of such a reverse of fortune) it will appear how totally destitute he stood of every genuine friend. Accordingly it is reported that Tarquin used to say in his exile, that ‘his misfortunes had taught him to discern his real from his pretended friends, as it was now no longer in his power to make either of them any returns.’ I should much wonder, however, if, with a temper so insolent and ferocious, he ever had a sincere friend.”

THE LOVE OF KNOWLEDGE.

“So vehement a love of knowledge and science is innate in us, that no one can doubt that the nature of man is drawn

* Cicero puts these sentiments into the mouth of the elder Cato, who is the speaker in the passage quoted above.

to them without being attracted by any external gain. Do we not see how boys cannot be deterred even by stripes from the consideration and investigation of such and such things? How, though they may be beaten, they still pursue their inquiries, and rejoice in having acquired some knowledge? How they delight in telling others what they have learnt? How they are attracted by processions, and games, and spectacles of that kind, and will endure even hunger and thirst for such an object? Can I say no more? Do we not see those who are fond of liberal studies and arts regard neither their health nor their estate; and endure everything because they are charmed with the intrinsic beauty of knowledge and science; and that they put the pleasures which they derive from learning in the scale against the greatest care and labor? And Homer himself appears to me to have had some such feeling as this, which he has developed in what he has said about the songs of the Sirens; for they do not seem to have been accustomed to attract those who were sailing by with the sweetness of their voices, or with any novelty or variety in their song, but the profession which they made of possessing great knowledge; so that men clung to their rocks from a desire of learning. For thus they invite Ulysses (for I have translated several passages of Homer, and this among them):—

‘Oh stay, O pride of Greece! Ulysses, stay!
 Oh, cease thy course, and listen to our lay!
 Blest is the man ordained our voice to hear:
 Our song instructs the soul and charms the ear.
 Approach, thy soul shall into raptures rise;
 Approach, and learn new wisdom from the wise.
 We know whate’er the kings of mighty name
 Achieved at Illium on the field of fame:
 Whate’er beneath the sun’s bright journey lies—
 Oh stay and learn new wisdom from the wise.’

“Homer saw that the story would not be probable if he represented so great a man as caught by mere songs; so they promise him knowledge, which it was not strange that a man desirous of wisdom should consider dearer than his country. And, indeed, to wish to know everything of every kind, is natural to the curious; but, to be attracted by the contemplation of greater objects, to entertain a general desire for knowledge, ought to be considered a proof of a great man.”

—DE FINIBUS.

CAIUS JULIUS CÆSAR.

100-44 *B.C.*

The life of this extraordinary man is so familiar to every student that it will only be necessary to name those of his works which remain to us. These are generally known as Commentaries. Seven books entitled *De Bello Gallico*, which give an account of his campaign in Gaul, were by the hand of Cæsar himself; the eighth book was probably written under his immediate direction. Three books entitled "*De Bello Civili*" continue the account of that contest up to the death of Pompey; the remaining portion, containing a relation of the Alexandrine and African expeditions was composed by Aulus Hirtius, a zealous friend and follower of the Dictator. The chief characteristic of the historical writings of Cæsar is a severe simplicity joined with precision and clearness. The Commentaries are considered models of the purest Latin, and are among the most useful and popular text-books for students of that language.

CATULLUS.
B.C. 86-47.

C. Valerius Catullus, a native of Verona, and a lyric poet of some celebrity. He was sent to Rome at an early age, and was soon carried away by the vices and dissipation which already prevailed among the higher circles of the great capital. In the midst of a career of pleasure, Catullus found time to cultivate his poetic gifts; he was admired for the elegance of

his verse, and soon became one of the most popular poets of his day.

The productions of Catullus bore the impress of his life, and exhibit, in striking contrast, the most revolting sensuality, mingled with gleams of taste, genuine feeling, and the polish of high intellectual refinement.

The career of the poet was brief and unfortunate. Ruined by extravagance and dissipation, he strove to retrieve his fortunes in the East, but returned disappointed, "with his purse full of cobwebs." The irritable and vindictive temper of Catullus caused him to indulge in satire; Cæsar was the object of his most bitter attacks, and he even went so far as to read some of his lampoons in the presence of the Dictator. The great Roman heard the invectives without a change of countenance, and showed his contemptuous indifference by sending the poet an invitation to supper.

Catullus had built a beautiful villa on the peninsula of Sirmio; the following lines were written on his return from Bithynia:

TO THE PENINSULA OF SIRMIO.

"Sirmio, the lovely eye of every isle
And green peninsula, where'er they smile,
Whether the fresh or briny wave surround,
The floating lake, or ocean's blue profound;
With what a joyous willingness of mind
I thee revisit! leaving far behind,
Still half incredulous, Bithynia's plain,
And gaze, in safety, on thy scenes again!
Oh! what more blissful than to loose the breast
From cares, and bid the unburdened spirit rest?
Sit by our home fire-side, forget the toil
Of weary wanderings on a foreign soil;
And on the longed-for bed sink down at last
In full-felt ease; o'erpaid for hardships past!

Hail, pleasant Sirmio ! for thy master's sake
 Rejoice ! Ye waters of the Lydian lake,
 Brighten in joy ! and each remembered thing
 That laughs of home, shall smile my welcoming."
 —ELTON.

TO MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO,
 WHO HAD PLEADED SUCCESSFULLY FOR CATULLUS.

"Tully, most eloquent, most sage,
 Of all the Roman race,
 That deck the past or present age,
 Or future days may grace.

Oh ! may Catullus thus declare
 An overflowing heart ;
 And though the worst of poets, dare
 A grateful lay impart ?

'Twill teach thee how thou hast surpast
 All others in thy line ;
 Far, far as he in his is last,
 Art thou the first in thine."

—HON. G. LAMB.

SALLUST.

86-34 B. C.

Crispus Sallustius was born at Amiternum, in the country of the Sabines. He received his education in Rome, and was appointed quæstor when only twenty-seven years of age. Some years later, as Tribune of the Commons, he conducted the prosecution of Milo for the murder of Clodius.

About 50 B.C. Sallust was expelled from the Senate, ostensibly on a charge of immorality, but more probably on account of his attachment to the party of Cæsar. He joined that commander in Gaul, and afterwards accompanied him on his African expedition. When Cæsar returned to Italy, Sallust remained as

Governor of Numidia, and in the course of one year amassed so large a fortune that he was content to retire from public life. It was in vain that the Numidians complained of the shameless manner in which their province had been despoiled. Sallust, secure in the protection of Cæsar, enjoyed in luxurious ease the wealth which he had gained by plunder and extortion. He built a magnificent palace in the suburbs of Rome, and surrounded it with grounds so beautifully laid out and adorned that the place was celebrated long after under the name of the "Gardens of Sallust." In this splendid retreat the historian occupied himself in literary labors, taking no part in the troubles which followed the death of Cæsar. He died peacefully in the year 34 B.C.

The only extant works of Sallust are his history of the Conspiracy of Catiline, and that of the Jugurthine War. His style is formed on that of Thucydides, but he falls far below his great model. In the writings of Sallust the reflections are artificial and overstrained, but when depicting character he can hardly be surpassed. There are few portraits in history drawn with more vividness than those of Catiline and Jugurtha. The subjects of which this historian speaks are in themselves painful: conspiracies, usurpations, and civil wars. They exhibit only the dark side of human nature and the struggle of contending passions.

FROM THE SPEECH OF CATO ON THE PUNISHMENT OF
THE CONSPIRATORS.

"My feelings, Conscript Fathers, differ extremely from some of those who have spoken, when I contemplate our circumstances and dangers, and when I revolve in my mind the sentiments of some who have spoken before me. Those speakers, as it seems to me, have considered only how to

punish the traitors who have raised war against their country, their parents, their altars, and their homes ; but the state of affairs warns us rather to secure ourselves against them, than to take counsel as to what sentence we should pass upon them. Other crimes you may punish after they have been committed ; but as to this, unless you prevent its commission, you will, when it has once taken effect, in vain appeal to justice. When the city is taken, no power is left to the vanquished.

“ But, in the name of the immortal gods, I call upon you who have always valued your mansions and villas, your statues and pictures, at a higher price than the welfare of your country ; if you wish to preserve those possessions, of whatever kind they are, to which you are attached ; if you wish to secure quiet for the enjoyment of your pleasures, arouse yourselves, and act in defence of your country. We are not now debating on the revenues, or on injuries done to our allies, but our liberties and our lives are at stake.

“ Often, Conscript Fathers, have I spoken at great length in this assembly : often have I complained of the luxury and avarice of our citizens, and, by that very means, have incurred the displeasure of many. I, who never excused to myself, or to my own conscience, the commission of any fault, could not easily pardon the misconduct, or indulge the licentiousness of others. But though you little regarded my remonstrances, yet the Republic remained secure ; its own strength was proof against your remissness. The question, however, at present under discussion is, not whether we live in a good or bad state of morals ; nor how great, or how splendid, the empire of the Roman people is ; but whether these things around us, of whatever value they are, are to continue our own, or to fall, with ourselves, into the hands of the enemy.

“ In such a case, does any one talk to me of gentleness and compassion ? For some time past, it is true, we have lost the real name of things ; for to lavish the property of others is called generosity, and audacity in wickedness is called heroism ; and hence the state is reduced to the brink of ruin. But let those, who thus misname things, be liberal, since such is the practice, out of the property of our allies ; let them be merciful to the robbers of the treasury ; but let them not lavish our blood, and whilst they spare a few criminals, bring destruction on all the guiltless.”

VIRGIL.

70—19 B.C.

Publius Virgilius Maro was born on the 16th day of October, 70 B.C., at a village called Andes, situated about three miles from the city of Mantua. Pompey the Great and Marcus Licinius were at that time consuls.

The father of Virgil was a man of humble birth, according to some, a potter or bricklayer. His wife, Maia, was superior to him in rank, and he received as her dowry a small farm, which he cultivated for the maintenance of his family. At the age of seven Virgil was sent to Cremona, where he pursued his studies until he assumed the toga virilis, at the age of seventeen. In the street of St. Bartholomew, a house is still shown which is said to have sheltered the youth of the great poet.

From Cremona, Virgil removed to Milan, and thence to Naples. There he devoted himself to the study of Greek, and was soon familiar with the poetical masterpieces in that language. He applied himself also to medicine, mathematics, and philosophy. He received instructions in the Epicurean system from a preceptor named Tyro, in whose honor he afterwards composed the sixth Eclogue.

It is believed that Virgil resided for some time on his Mantuan farm, where he acquired that practical knowledge of agriculture which he displays in his Georgics. Although he had not as yet composed any of the great works which have immortalized his name, he had given sufficient proofs of poetic genius to attract the attention of his countrymen.

Virgil possessed a warm friend and admirer in Varus, a fellow-student, and his acquaintance was sought by Gallus, a distinguished writer. It was probably this latter friend who introduced the young poet to the notice of Pollio, at that time commander of the troops in Cisalpine Gaul. He was a generous patron of letters, and while he governed that part of Italy, the poet dwelt peacefully on his farm, equally secure from the violence of the soldiers and the exactions of their commander.

After the battle of Philippi, Augustus divided the lands in the vicinity of Mantua among his veteran soldiers, and Virgil shared the common calamity. Pollio, who had been a zealous partisan of Marc Antony, was unable at that time to afford the poet any protection. He took the earliest opportunity, however, to recommend him to Mæcenæ, who enjoyed the confidence of Augustus; and through his influence Virgil obtained the restoration of his little patrimony. He hastened to take possession of his farm, but the military occupant, a centurion named Arrius, resisted the decree of the emperor, and proceeded to personal violence, so that the poet was obliged to flee, and escaped only by swimming over the river Mincius. He repaired to Rome, where he appealed a second time to Augustus; but it does not appear that he ever resided for any length of time on the estate which he had taken so much pains to recover.

A wider field was now open to the rising poet, who enjoyed, with the favor of Augustus, the friendship of the most distinguished men in Rome. It is believed that he had completed his twenty-ninth year when he commenced his *Bucolics*, or pastoral poems, which he named also *Eclogæ*, from a Greek word signifying

selections. They are written in imitation of the *Idyllia* of Theocritus, and it is generally conceded that while the Greek poet shows greater force and originality, Virgil excels in refinement and correct taste. His descriptions of scenery are imitations, and, for that reason perhaps, fall below those of Theocritus. In the *Eclogues*, however, the reader is not shocked by what is gross or mean, and Virgil shows us the simplicity of pastoral life divested of anything which can offend delicacy or refinement.

In the first *Eclogue*, Virgil represents his own good fortune in the person of Tityrus, a rustic, dwelling peacefully on the farm restored by a powerful benefactor. Melibœus, on the other hand, in bewailing his own lot, describes that of the Mantuan peasants driven from their homes by a ruthless soldiery.

Speaking of his happiness, Tityrus says :

“These blessings, friend, a deity bestowed ;*
For never can I deem him less than God.
The tender firstlings of my woolly breed
Shall on his holy altar often bleed.”

And again :

“The inhabitants of seas and skies shall change,
And fish on shore, and stags in air shall range ;
The banished Parthian dwell on Arar’s brink,
And the blue German from the Tigris drink,
Ere I, forsaking gratitude and truth,
Forget the figure of that godlike youth.”

When Melibœus has bemoaned his unhappy fate, the pastoral concludes with the invitation of Tityrus :

“This night, at least, with me forget your care,
Chestnuts and curds and cream shall be your fare ;
The carpet ground shall be with leaves o’erspread,
And boughs shall weave a covering for your head.
For see, yon sunny hill its shade extends ;
And curling smoke from cottages ascends.”

* This and following quotations are taken from Dryden’s translation.

In the fourth Eclogue, Virgil is supposed to celebrate the birth of Saloninus, a son of Pollio, born during his father's consulship. This poem has given rise to much controversy. The poet ascribes to the son of his friend a mission transcending all human powers, and many of the verses recall in a striking manner the prophecies of Scripture regarding the Messias, particularly those of Isaías.

We are told there existed among the heathen an expectation of a Redeemer, who was to regenerate the world, and bring back the Golden Age, and that the time of his advent, as pointed out by the Sibylline and other prophecies, had now arrived. This Virgil expresses in the fourth line, where he says :

“The last age of the Cumean prophecy hath now arrived.”

It seems probable that while Virgil embodied in the poem the belief derived from primitive tradition, and perhaps from some acquaintance with the Jewish Scriptures, he offered the verses without scruple as a homage to his benefactor. The infant to whom they were ostensibly addressed lived but nine days.

The Eclogues were extremely popular, and Cicero, after hearing them recited on the stage, spoke of the poet as “*Magnæ spes altera Romæ.*”

One of the most serious consequences of the civil wars was the general neglect of agriculture. Lands, formerly productive, were everywhere lying waste, and the distress was so great as to be a cause of serious disquiet. It is said that Mæcenas, considering these dangers, requested Virgil to compose a treatise on agriculture. He believed that such a work might revive an interest in the subject among the higher classes, who neglected the only sure source of prosperity in

the struggle for court favor and the spoils of foreign and domestic war. In accordance with this suggestion, Virgil commenced his *Georgics*, the most finished of all his works, and the finest didactic poem in any language. The composition occupied the poet seven years, during which time he resided principally at Naples, where he enjoyed greater tranquillity than he could hope to find at Rome.

The first *Georgic* opens with an enumeration of the subjects which the poet is about to treat, and the dedication of the whole to his generous patron :

“What makes a pleasant harvest, when to turn
The fruitful soil, and when to sow the corn ;
The care of sheep, of oxen, and of kine ;
And how to raise on elms the teeming vine ;
The birth and genius of the frugal bee,
I sing, Mæcenas, and I sing to thee.”

The *Georgics* contain the most detailed instructions on every point connected with farming, but mingled with these practical lessons we find sometimes a trace of popular superstitions :

“The lucky days in each revolving moon,
For labors choose ; the fifth be sure to shun ;
That gave the Furies and pale Pluto birth,
And armed against the skies the sons of earth.
The seventh is, next the tenth, the best to join
Young oxen to the yoke, and plant the vine.
Then, weavers, stretch your stays upon the web,
The ninth is good for travel, bad for theft.”

In another passage Virgil avails himself of the ideas prevalent concerning natural phenomena to pay a tribute to the memory of the first Cæsar. After speaking of various prognostics of the weather, he says :

“ The sun reveals the secret of the sky ;
 And who dares give the source of light the lie ?
 The change of empires often he declares,
 Fierce tumults, hidden treasons, open wars.
 He first the fate of Cæsar did foretell,
 And pitied Rome, when Rome in Cæsar fell,
 In iron clouds concealed the public light ;
 And impious mortals feared eternal night.

Nor was the fact foretold by him alone.
 Nature herself stood forth and seconded the sun.
 Earth, air and seas with prodigies were signed,
 And birds obscene and howling dogs divined.
 What rocks did Ætna's bellowing mouth expire
 From her torn entrails ! and what floods of fire !
 What clanks were heard, in German skies afar,
 Of arms and armies rushing to the war !
 Dire earthquakes rent the solid Alps below,
 And from their summits shook th' eternal snow :
 Pale spectres in the close of night were seen ;
 And voices heard of more than mortal men
 In silent groves.”

The poet, true to his mission, loses no opportunity of painting the happiness of a country life, contrasting the innocent pleasures and the sweet repose which crown the peasants' toil, with the luxury of those degenerate Romans who valued victory only for its spoils :

“ Who houses burn and household gods deface,
 To drink in bowls which glittering gems enchase,
 To loll on couches rich with citron steads,
 And lay their guilty limbs on Tyrian beds ! ”

Describing the contrast presented by the virtuous rustic, he exclaims :

“ Oh ! happy, if he knew his happy state,
 The swain, who, free from business and debate,
 Receives his easy food from nature's hand,
 And just returns of cultivated land !
 No palace with a lofty gate he wants,
 T' admit the tide of early visitants,

With eager eyes devouring, as they pass,
The breathing figures of Corinthian brass.
No statues threaten, from high pedestals ;
No Persian arras hides his homely walls
With antique vests, which, through their shady fold,
Betray the streaks of ill-dissembled gold ;
He boasts no wool, whose native white is dyed
With purple poison of Assyrian pride.
No costly drugs of Araby defile,
With foreign scents, the sweetness of his oil ;
But easy quiet, a secure retreat,
A harmless life, that knows not how to cheat.
With home-bred plenty, the rich owner bless,
And rural pleasures crown his happiness.
Unvexed with quarrels, undisturbed with noise,
The country king his peaceful realm enjoys—
Cool grots, and living lakes, the flow'ry pride
Of meads and streams that through the valley glide.
And shady groves that easy sleep invite,
And, after toilsome days, a soft repose at night."

Soon after the completion of the Georgics, Virgil commenced his last and greatest work, the *Æneid*. It would seem, from some lines in the third Georgic, that he had thought of taking as the subject of his epic the wars of Augustus. He says :

"A time will come when my maturer muse
In Cæsar's wars a nobler theme shall choose,
And through more ages bear my sovereign's praise
Than have from Tithon passed to Cæsar's days."

Whether guided by his own better judgment or by the advice of friends, he made a more happy selection. He chose as the subject of his great poem the adventures of *Æneas*—his wanderings with the band of fugitives who had escaped the sword of the Greeks, and their final settlement in Italy. This theme offered every advantage that could be desired. It formed, as it were, a sequel to the great Homeric poems ; the

dim halo of antiquity invested the personages with a poetic grandeur, and left the poet free to embellish his narrative with such incidents as might add to its interest. The supposed descent of the Romans from Æneas and the Trojan colonists, afforded also an opportunity which Virgil did not neglect of complimenting Augustus and the great families of Rome.

The *Æneid* contains twelve books. The first six, which give a history of the wanderings of Æneas, are modelled on the *Odyssey* of Homer; in the concluding portion Virgil intended an imitation of the *Iliad*. It is generally acknowledged that while the first part of this great epic far surpasses the story of the adventures of Ulysses, the latter portion will not compare so favorably with the *Iliad*. The contests in which Æneas is made to engage possess little interest beside the wonderful legends of the Trojan war, and in the description of battles Virgil falls below the Greek poet in fire and sublimity.

The action of the poem commences with a storm raised by the anger of Juno, who cannot endure that even a poor remnant of the hated Trojans should escape her vengeance. Seeing the fleet of Æneas sailing prosperously to his destined settlements in Italy, she seeks Æolia, the birth-place of the winds, and addresses herself to their king, who, throned on high, controls their imprisoned might.

“Break but that sceptre, sea and land*
And heaven’s ethereal deep,
Before them they would whirl like sand,
And through the void air sweep.
But the great Sire, with prescient fear,
Had whelmed them deep in dungeon drear,
And o’er the struggling captives thrown
Huge masses of primeval stone,

* Extracts from *Æneid*, unless otherwise credited, are from translation of Rev. John

Ruled by a monarch who might know
 To curb them or to let them go ;
 Whom now as suppliant at his knees,
 Juno bespoke in words like these."

The goddess prefers her prayer that he would loose the tempests, and destroy the hated Trojans. Æolus grants her request.

" Therewith against the hollow hill he turned him spear in hand,
 And hurled it on the flank thereof, and as an ordered band,
 By whatso door the winds rush out o'er earth in whirling blast,
 And driving down upon the sea its lowest deeps upcast.
 The East, the West together there, the Afric, that doth hold
 A heart fulfilled of stormy rain, huge billows shoreward rolled.
 Therewith came clamor of the men and whistling through the shrouds,
 And heaven and day all suddenly were swallowed by the clouds
 Away from eyes of Teucrian men ; night on the ocean lies,
 Pole thunders unto pole, and still with wildfire glare the skies,
 And ail things hold the face of death before the seamen's eyes.

Now therewithal Æneas' limbs grew weak with chilly dread,
 He groaned, and lifting both his palms aloft to heaven, he said :

' O thrice and four times happy ye, that had the fate to fall
 Before your fathers' faces there by Troy's beloved wall !
 Tydides, thou of Danaan folk the mightiest under shield,
 Why might I never lay me down upon the Ilian field,
 Why was my soul forbid release at thy most mighty hand,
 Where eager Hector stooped and lay before Achilles' wand,
 Where huge Sarpedon fell asleep, where Simoïs rolls along
 The shields of men, and helms of men, and bodies of the strong ?'

Thus as he cried the whistling North fell on with sudden gale,
 And drave the seas up towards the stars, and smote aback the sail ;

Then break the oars, the bows fall off, and beam on in the
 trough
 She lieth, and the sea comes on a mountain huge and rough.
 These hang upon the topmost wave, and those may well
 discern
 The sea's ground 'mid the gaping whirl; with sand the
 surges churn."

—MORRIS.

The storm is appeased by Neptune, but the Trojan fleet has been driven upon the shore of Africa, near the rising city of Carthage. The colony is ruled by Dido, a Tyrian princess. She receives the shipwrecked Trojans with generous hospitality, and the book closes with a description of the banquet given in honor of their arrival.

When the guests have feasted, and Iopas, the long-haired bard, has sung to his golden harp, Dido urges Æneas to relate, in detail, the story of the fall of Troy and of his seven years' wandering. The hero consents, and the narrative forms the subject of the second and third books. The second is generally considered the finest of the *Æneid*. Among many beautiful passages we select the apparition of Hector :

"Through all the city buried now in sleep and wine they
 break,
 Slain are the guards, at open gates their fellows in they take,
 Till all their bands confederate are met at last in one.
 It was the time when that first peace of sick men hath begun,
 By very gift of God o'er all in sweetest wise to creep,
 When Hector comes before mine eyes amid the dreams of
 sleep.
 Most sorrowful to see he was, and weeping plenteous flood,
 And e'en as torn behind the car, black with the dust and
 blood,
 His feet all swollen with the thong that pierced them through
 and through.
 Woe worth the while for what he was ! How changed from
 him we knew !

The Hector come from out the fight in arms Achilles lost,
The Hector that on Danaan decks the Phrygian firebrands
tost.

Foul was his beard, and all his hair was matted up with gore,
And on his body were the wounds, the many wounds he bore
Around his Troy. I seemed in sleep, I weeping e'en as he,
To speak unto the hero first in voice of misery :

' O Light of Troy, most faithful hope of all the Teucrian
men,
What stay hath held thee back so long ? from what shore
com'st thou then,
Long-looked-for Hector ? that at last, so many died away,
Such toil of city, toil of men, we see thy face to-day,
We so forwearied ? What hath fouled in such an evil wise
Thy cheerful face ? what mean these hurts thou showest to
mine eyes ? '

Nought : nor my questions void and vain one moment
turned his speech ;
Who from the inmost of his heart a heavy groan did reach :
' O Goddess-born, flee forth,' he said, ' and snatch thee from
the fire !
The foeman hath the walls, and Troy is down from topmost
spire.
For Priam and for country now enough. If any hand
Might have kept ancient Pergamos, by mine it yet should
stand.
Her holy things and household gods 'Troy gives in charge to
thee ;
Take these as fellows of thy fate : go forth the walls to see,
The great walls thou shalt build, when thou the sea hast
wandered o'er.'

He spake, and from the inner shrine forth in his hands he
bore
Great Vesta, and the holy bands, and fire that never dies.

Meanwhile the city's turmoiled woe was wrought in diverse
wise,
And though my father's house aback, apart from all was set,
And hedged about with many trees, clearer and clearer yet
The sounds grew on us, ever swelled the weapons' dread
and din.

I shake off sleep and forthwithal climb up aloft and win
To topmost roof: with ears pricked up I stand to hearken all.
As when before the furious South the driven flame doth fall
Among the corn; or like as when the hill-flood rolls in haste
To waste the fields and acres glad, the oxen's toil to waste,
'Tearing the headlong woods along, while high upon a stone
'The unready shepherd stands amazed, and hears the sound
come on.

'Then was their faith made manifest, then Danaan guile lay
bare;

Deiphobus' wide house even now, o'ertopped by Vulcan's
flare

Shows forth its fall: Ucalegon's is burning by its side;
'The narrow seas Sigœum guards gleam litten far and wide.
'The shout of men ariseth now, and blaring of the horn,
And mad I catch my weapons up, though idly they be borne."

Dido, who had vowed eternal fidelity to the memory of her husband, the murdered Sichæus, is touched by the misfortunes of Æneas, and offers to make him a partner of her throne, and to receive his followers among her subjects. The weary Trojans welcome with joy this termination of their wanderings, while Æneas himself returns the affection of the queen, and lingers at Carthage, unmindful of the decrees of fate and of the great destinies that awaited him in Italy. He is only aroused from this life of inglorious ease by the direct intervention of the gods. Mercury is sent by Jupiter to reproach the hero and command him to proceed on his appointed mission. We may here remark that although the character of Æneas is sometimes deficient in those qualities that awaken sympathy, he is nevertheless the first classic hero who controls his passions through a sense of duty, and in obedience to the divine will. These high principles had been for a time forgotten, but the heavenly messenger awakens him from his dream of happiness, and he goes forth to new toils and combats.

Dido learns that Æneas is preparing secretly to depart ; her grief and unavailing anger, with her despair and death, form the subject of the fourth book. The feelings of the unhappy queen, when the entreaties of her sister and her own prayers have alike failed, are thus described :

“Then maddened by her destiny,
 Unhappy Dido prays to die :
 'Tis weary to look up and see
 The over-arching sky.
 It chanced, to fortify her heart
 And steel her purpose to depart ;
 Before the altar as she stands
 She sees a blackness gathering o'er
 The chalice mantling in her hands,
 And wine—O horror !—turns to gore.
 Not e'en unto her sister's ear
 She dared to breathe that tale of fear.
 Beside, within her courts a fane
 There stood, of marble's purest grain,
 Where oft she went to render vows ;
 The chapel of her murdered spouse,
 Wreathed with white wool and sacred boughs ;
 Thence, when the dark was over all,
 There came a sighing and a call,
 As in the dead man's tone
 And midnight's solitary bird
 Death-boding, from the roof was heard
 To make its long, long moan.
 And prophecies of by-gone seers
 Ring terror in her wildered ears.
 Æneas, with unpitying eye,
 In visions of the night sweeps by ;
 And still companionless she seems
 To tread the wilderness of dreams,
 And vainly still her Tyrians seek
 Through desert regions—ah, how bleak !
 Like frantic Pentheus, when he sees
 The dragon-eyed Eumenides,
 And two red suns appear to rise,
 And Thebes looks double to his eyes ;

Or as the Atridan matricide
 Runs frenzied o'er the scene,
 What time with snakes and torches plied
 He flees the murdered queen.
 While at the threshold of the gate
 The sister fiends expectant wait."

In the following lines the poet contrasts the repose of nature with the tumult of human passions :

"'Tis night ; earth's tired ones taste the balm,
 The precious balm of sleep,
 And in the forests there is calm,
 And on the savage deep.
 The stars are in their middle flight ;
 The fields are hushed : each bird or beast
 That dwells beside the silver lake
 Or haunts the tangles of the brake
 In placid slumbers lies, released
 From trouble by the touch of night,
 All but the hapless queen ; to rest
 She yields not, nor with eye nor breast
 The gentle night receives."

Dido is at length conquered by despair, and puts an end to her own life. The fourth book closes with this tragical event. The Trojans have sailed from Carthage, but are still within sight of shore when the skies are reddened by the light of Dido's funeral pile.

The visit of Æneas to Acestes, in Italy, and the games which the hero institutes in honor of his father, Anchises, are the principal subjects of the fifth book.

The sixth book contains an account of Æneas' descent into hell. He traverses these dreary realms under the guidance of the Cumœan Sibyl, who explains to the hero the wonders which he beholds, and elucidates different maxims of religion and morality according to the doctrines of Pythagoras, Plato, and other philosophers. In this episode Virgil excels

Homer, the descent of Ulysses into Hades being far inferior both in picturesque description and philosophic thought.

The Trojan hero is permitted to converse with the shade of his father, Anchises. The latter causes to pass before him in prophetic vision the forms of his descendants, and of the great men and warriors who were to constitute the future strength of Rome. This passage furnished Virgil with an opportunity of celebrating the glories of Augustus, and of complimenting many distinguished Romans.

The imperial family had been deeply grieved at the death of Marcellus, son of Octavia, the sister of Augustus. He was a young prince of great promise, and had been adopted by the emperor as his heir. He died at the age of twenty, and was universally lamented by the people.

Æneas beholds the shade of Marcellus in the ranks of the Roman heroes :

“ Then spoke Æneas, who beheld
Beside the warrior pace
A youth, full armed, by none excelled
In beauty’s manly grace ;
But on his brow was nought of mirth,
And his fixed eyes were dropped on earth :
‘ Who, father, he who thus attends
Upon that chief divine ?
His son or other who descends
From his illustrious line ?
What whispers in the encircling crowd !
The portance of his steps how proud !
But gloomy night, as of the dead,
Flaps his sad pinions o’er his head.’
The sire replies, while down his cheek
The tear-drops roll apace :
‘ Ah, son ! compel me not to speak
The sorrows of our race !

That youth the fates but just display
 To earth, nor let him longer stay :
 A gift like this for aye to hold
 Rome's heart had e'en been overbold.
 Ah ! what a groan from Mars's plain
 Shall o'er the city sound !
 How wilt thou gaze on that long train,
 Old Tiber, rolling to the main
 Beside his new raised mound !
 No youth of Ilium's seed inspires
 With hope as fair his Latin sires ;
 Nor Rome shall cherish at her knee
 A nursling so adored as he.
 O piety ! O ancient faith !
 O hand untamed in battle scathe !
 Dear child of pity ! should'st thou burst
 The dungeon bars of fate accursed,
 Our own Marcellus thou !
 Bring lilies here, in handfuls bring ;
 Their lustrous blooms I fain would fling ;
 Such honors to a grandson's shade
 By grandsire's hands may well be paid :
 Yet, O ! it 'vails not now ! "

When the poet had completed the sixth book he was prevailed upon to recite some portions of the work in the presence of Augustus. He chose for this purpose the second, fourth, and sixth books. Augustus, who was still deeply grieved at the loss of Marcellus, was much affected by the passage just quoted, and Octavia, the mother of the young prince, swooned away. The emperor acknowledged the graceful tribute to his nephew by presenting the poet with ten sestertia (about \$390) for each line of the eulogium.

The composition of the last six books of the *Æneid* occupied the poet during four years. The seventh book opens with the description of the voyage of *Æneas* from Gaëta to the mouth of the Tiber, and the entrance of the hero upon that historic river :

“The breezes freshen towards the night,
Nor doth the moon refuse
Her guiding lamp; its tremulous light
The glancing deep bestrews.
Next, skirting still the shore, they run
Fair Circe’s magic coast along,
Where she, bright daughter of the sun,
Her forest fastness thrills with song;
And for a nightly blaze, consumes
Rich cedar in her stately rooms,
While, sounding shrill, the comb is sped
From end to end adown the thread;
Thence hear they ’mid the darkness roar,
The lion struggling with his chain,
The raging bear, the bristling boar,
While forms of gaunt wolves howl amain:
Who, from the human form divine,
The cruel Circe, ruthless queen!
Had changed by pharmacy malign,
To bristling hide and bestial mien.
So, lest the pious Trojan train
Such dire enormity sustain,
The harbor should they reach, or land
On that inhospitable strand,
The Ocean-god inflates their sails
With breath of favorable gales,
And speeds their flight, and bears them safe
Where angry waves no longer chafe.
The sea was reddening with the dawn,
The queen of morn, on high,
Was seen in rosy chariot drawn,
Against a saffron sky,
When on the bosom of the deep
The zephyrs dropped at once to sleep,
And, struck with calm, the tired oars strain
Against the smooth unmoving main.
Now from the deep Æneas sees
A mighty grove of glancing trees.
Embowered amid the sylvan scene
Old Tiber winds his banks between,
And in the lap of Ocean pours
His gulfy stream, his sandy stores.
Around, gay birds of diverse wing,
Accustomed there to fly or sing,

Were fluttering from spray to spray
And soothing ether with their lay.
He bids his comrades turn aside,
And landward set each vessel's head,
And enters with triumphant pride
The river's shadowy bed."

On the completion of the *Æneid*, Virgil visited Greece. It was his intention to spend three years in that country, occupying himself in the revision of his epic, and in the study of philosophy. His health, which had been always delicate, failed so completely that he was no longer equal to the task. Desiring to see Italy once more, he consented to accompany Augustus, who was then returning from an expedition to the East. The voyage exhausted the remaining strength of the poet; he landed at Brundisium, where he expired September 22, B.C. 19, in the fifty-first year of his age. He was buried near Naples, and his tomb is still to be seen about two miles from that city, on the road to Puteoli.

It is said that Virgil directed in his will that the *Æneid* (probably only the last books) should be burned, as imperfect and unfinished. This Augustus would not permit. He gave the manuscript to Varus, Tucca, and Plotius, with instructions to expunge whatever they thought proper, without adding anything of their own. This may account for the many unfinished lines in the latter portion of the poem.

Considering his genius only, Virgil must be honored as the second epic poet of the world; in high-toned morality and delicacy of sentiment he is undoubtedly the first. Living without reproach in a corrupt age, the purity of his heart has left its impress upon his works, which are also pervaded by a deep sense of natural religion. We cannot wonder at the almost

reverent admiration with which his character and writings were regarded by many of the Christian fathers, and the masters of the mediæval schools.

Q. HORATIUS FLACCUS.

65-8 B. C.

The character of lyric verse, more subjective than any other species of composition, permits the poet to present his own personality to the reader. Horace has fully availed himself of this freedom, and has left in his poems the material for a complete biography.

The father of the great lyric poet was a freedman, having been, it is thought, a slave of some member of the Horatian family. In this connection, a few remarks upon the class of *libertini*, or freedmen, may not seem out of place. In the study of Roman history, there is nothing which excites so much surprise as the rapid degeneracy of that remarkable people. The cause usually assigned, the influx of wealth from the conquered East, does not appear sufficient. The higher orders of the State, suddenly enriched, suffered no doubt from the corrupting influence, but the evil consequences could not have developed so soon among the masses. We must look rather to the influence which Roman law, and public opinion stronger than law, exercised upon the occupations of the middle and lower classes.

The pride of character, inherent in every Roman, if it had its beneficial influence in preserving the freedom of the Commons and maintaining the ascendancy of the Republic, was also productive of incalculable evil. War and agriculture were the only occupations considered worthy of a Roman citizen. The senatorial

order was excluded by law from commercial pursuits ; its members were not even permitted to own vessels of a certain burden, lest they might be tempted to employ them in trade. Popular feeling went still further, and many of the most lucrative pursuits were held to be degrading, not merely to the least among the patricians, but to any free-born Roman. Cicero considers manufactures and retail trade as sordid and illiberal. Even higher callings, such as architecture, he regards with a doubtful eye, the camp and the farm being the only spheres in which he appreciates the dignity of labor.

As a natural consequence of this feeling, the trades and mechanic arts were generally abandoned to foreigners, or to freedmen who retained the servile spirit and the vices of their former state. As Rome extended her dominions by conquest, this evil assumed continually larger proportions. Hordes of Eastern slaves filled, not only Rome, but every Italian and Sicilian town. Many of these wrought, even as slaves, in the various arts in which they were skilled ; as freedmen, they labored on their own account, gaining not only wealth, but the power and influence which follow surely in its train.

In an ordinary state of society, a certain proportion of the middle class, becoming impoverished, sink to a level with the lowest, their places being filled by those among the people who rise, sometimes by a happy stroke of fortune, but more frequently by superior ability and enterprise. Such alternations produce a healthy circulation in the whole body, and preserve the national spirit in its full vigor. In Rome it was otherwise. The middle classes of the large cities, debarred in a great measure from industrial pursuits,

declined rapidly in wealth and influence. Alliances with wealthy freedmen were not unfrequent; among the lower classes these intermarriages were so common as to change the national type. The characteristics of the nobler European race disappeared, and in an incredibly short space of time, the conquerors of the world, distinguished by their simple and rugged virtues, were represented by a servile and degraded people, whose highest aspirations were expressed in the popular cry: "Panem et Circenses!"—Bread, and the sports of the amphitheatre!

This state of things was not without its effect upon the highest classes of Rome. While virtue and a spirit of independence are found in the ranks of the people, the aristocracy will be restrained, both by fear and shame, from exciting their indignation by degrading excesses. This check was wanting in the latter days of the Roman Commonwealth. The evil which Horace reproved in his satires grew unchecked, until Rome was sunk in the depths of moral corruption which called forth the terrible denunciations of Juvenal.

Among those who honored by their virtue the freedom which they had won, was the father of our poet. His occupation was that of coactor, or collector of money from those who had made purchases at the public auctions. He was enabled by prudent industry to purchase a small estate near Venusia, on the confines of Lucania and Apulia. Here Horace was born, and his childhood, passed amid the natural beauties of a picturesque region, may have done much to foster his poetic taste. He relates an adventure of his childhood in which wood-doves performed the office attributed to the kindly robins in the story of the "Children in the Wood:"

“When from my nurse erewhile on Vultur’s steep
 I stray’d beyond the bound,
 Of our small homestead’s ground,
 Was I, fatigued with play, beneath a heap
 Of fresh leaves sleeping found,

Strewn by the storied doves ; and wonder fell
 On all, their nest who keep
 On Acherontia’s steep,
 Or in Forentum’s low rich pastures dwell,
 Or Bantine woodlands deep.

That safe from bears and adders in such place
 I lay, and slumbering smiled,
 O’erstrewn with myrtle wild,
 And laurel, by the god’s peculiar grace
 No craven-hearted child.”

When the poet had attained his twelfth year his father brought him to Rome that he might enjoy better instruction than could be obtained at Venúsia. He placed him under the tuition of one Orbilius, a famous grammarian—a somewhat formidable instructor to the youth under his care, as we should judge from the appellation, Plagósus Orbilius (the flogging Orbilius), by which he was generally known. The young student was so generously provided that he was able to associate on equal terms with boys of the highest rank. Of this, and of his father’s solicitude for his moral and intellectual training, he thus speaks in Satire VI.:

“If none with avarice justly brand my fame,
 With sordidness, or deeds too vile to name ;
 If pure and innocent ; if dear (forgive
 These little praises) to my friends I live,
 My father was the cause, who, though maintained
 By a lean farm but poorly, yet disdained
 The country school-master, to whose low care
 The mighty captain sent his high-born heir
 With satchel, copy-book, and pelf to pay

The wretched teacher on the appointed day.
 To Rome by this bold father was I brought
 To learn those arts which well-born youths are taught ;
 So dressed, and so attended, you would swear
 I was some senator's expensive heir.
 Himself my guardian, of unblemished truth
 Among my tutors would attend my youth.
 And thus preserved my chastity of mind,
 That prime of virtues in its highest kind."

—FRANCIS.

In another place he says :

"The best of fathers on my youthful breast
 The detestation of a vice impressed
 By strong examples. Would he have me live
 Content with what his industry could give,
 In frugal, sparing sort : ' Behold, my son,
 Young Albius there, how wretchedly undone.'
 Yet no mean lesson is the spendthrift's fate
 To caution youth from squandering their estate."

—Sat. IV., *Ibid.*

Among the most amiable traits of the poet's character is the affectionate reverence in which he held the memory of his virtuous parent. There is a truly noble spirit in the following lines, taken from the Sixth Satire, already quoted :

"Nor, while my senses hold, shall I repent
 Of such a father, nor with pride resent,
 As many do, the involuntary disgrace
 Not to be born of an illustrious race.
 But not with theirs my sentiments agree
 Nor language ; for if nature should decree
 That we from any stated point might live
 Our former years, and to our choice should give
 The sires, to whom we wished to be allied ;
 Let others choose to gratify their pride,
 While I, contented with my own, resign
 The titled honors of an ancient line."

We can judge by the verses of the poet, particularly by his earlier odes, that when deprived of this wise

guardian, he fell in to a great extent with the licentious spirit of the age. We have abundant proof, also, that the esteem of virtue was never wholly lost; and we can feel assured that his early career, though far from blameless, may have appeared so, compared with the excesses which disgraced the Roman youth.

Horace was pursuing his studies at Athens when the death of Julius Cæsar changed the fortunes of the world. The young student, now about twenty-two years of age, joined the army of Brutus, serving in the rank of military tribune. He confesses in one of his odes that when he fled from the field of Philippi he did not rally with his comrades, but that he threw away his shield, and sought only to provide for his own safety.

Horace found, on his return to Rome, that his father was dead and that his patrimony had been confiscated. He obtained a situation as clerk in one of the public offices, but this occupation was distasteful to his pleasure-loving nature. It was then that, as Horace himself tells us, audacious poverty drove him to write verses. His genius was soon recognized by Virgil, and when that great poet obtained for him the protection of Mæcenas, his fortunes were assured.

Augustus looked kindly on the young poet, and Mæcenas obtained for him a grant of the Sabine farm which he has immortalized in his verses. It occupied a sheltered position at the foot of Mt. Lucretilis, about fifteen miles from Tibur (Tivoli), where Horace possessed, later, a charming villa. Behind the house, a rill, the source of the river Degentia (Licenza), flowed from the mountain side. This was the Bandusian fountain, "more transparent than glass," with whose

sparkling waters the prudent poet was accustomed to temper his wine.

The winter and early spring Horace usually spent in Rome, where he possessed a modest but agreeable dwelling on the heights of the Esquiline. When wearied with "the smoke, and noise, and magnificence of Rome," he repaired, sometimes to his villa at Tibur, but more frequently to the Sabine farm, which was his favorite retreat. The estate was neither large nor fertile, but it sufficed for the poet's modest wants. Here, as the humor led, he sometimes devoted himself to close study, and again would pass long hours reclining by his favorite stream, indulging in revery and listening to the music of the shepherd's reed. At other times he sought a healthful exercise in the labors of the field, provoking the amusement of his rustic neighbors by his awkwardness at this unwonted toil.

Horace was deservedly a favorite with his country friends. He loved to entertain the rural patriarchs of the district, who partook of his old wine, and delighted him by their homely wisdom and traditional stories. His slaves were not forgotten, and the kindly master would often participate in the merriment which they indulged around the blazing fire. Friends from Rome were also glad to seek relaxation from graver cares, and to enliven with philosophy and harmless wit these reunions which Horace styles "Nights and Suppers of the Gods."

Loving ease and pleasure rather than power, Horace persistently declined the offers of Augustus, who would have taken him into his service as private secretary. The poet was too wise to be a courtier, and we must admire the tact with which he accounts for

his unwillingness to trespass upon the favor of the emperor. In answer to a letter in which Augustus condescends to tax him with shunning his intimacy, Horace writes :

“ Since you, great Cæsar, singly wield the charge
Of Rome’s concerns, so manifold and large,—
With sword and shield the commonwealth protect,
With morals grace it, and with laws correct,—
The bard, methinks, would do a public wrong,
Who, having gained your ear, should keep it long.”

The poet was equally reluctant to employ his high gifts in extolling the exploits of the great. If we may trust Horace, Augustus was not easy to please in this particular, and without being averse to flattery, required that it should be delicately prepared and discreetly administered. The poet compares him to a spirited horse, whom it is not safe to “ stroke with an awkward hand.”

Horace revered the marriage tie, and deplored, both as a man and a patriot, the growing laxity of morals in this particular. Of this feeling, his verses bear ample testimony. Whether he speaks of the wife of a patrician friend, or of the “ sunburnt bride ” of the Apulian peasant, his appreciation of this sacred bond may be everywhere seen. Still, the freedom of the poet’s bachelor’s life was too agreeable to his temper to be lightly sacrificed, and he feared, perhaps, from the sad example of some among his friends, the tyranny of the *dotata conjux*,* the dowered wife.

* The ancient and solemn form of marriage (*matrimonium confarreationis*) by which the wife became a member of her husband’s family, and absolutely subject to his authority, had passed almost into disuse. By the more simple and less indissoluble rite, the wife retained full control of her dower, and a considerable degree of personal independence. In case of a patrician lady contracting marriage with a plebeian, the husband occupied a really subordinate position in his own household. He might bestow the name of his own obscure family upon his younger offspring, but the oldest son bore

The happiness of Horace was first interrupted by the death of Virgil, an event which he seems to have felt most deeply. That of his friend Tibullus soon followed, and these sad warnings awakened the epicurean poet to a keen sense of the frail tenure of life. The severest trial was, however, the loss of Mæcenas. In a verse addressed to this friend, whom he styles a "part of his soul," Horace declared that he could not long survive him. The words were prophetic, he expired a few weeks later, Nov. 27th, 8 B.C. His remains were laid near those of Mæcenas on the Esquiline Hill.

The productions of Horace are divided into Odes, Epodes, Satires, and Epistles. The Odes are for the most part imitations of the Greek; they want the fervor and lofty inspiration of the higher lyrics in that language, but are unsurpassed in grace, varied imagery, and felicity of expression.

The versification is melodious, and Horace judged rightly when he rested his claims to immortality upon these his favorite productions.

The most pleasing of the odes are those in which the poet describes the innocent pleasures of country life, or the beauties of nature, for which he always shows the keenest appreciation.

In the Satires Horace deals with the weaknesses and follies of men rather than with their vices and crimes. He smiles while he reproves, and appeals to good sense rather than to conscience.

The Epistles and Satires are more genial and unrestrained than the other compositions of the poet. In

that of the great house to which his mother still belonged. It was this anomaly, rather than any feeling of respect for birth, which caused some among the early Christian writers to reprobate these unequal alliances.

the epistles we see the character of Horace, his frank and amiable temper and his love of that independence which he would not sacrifice even for the gratification of his friend Mæcenas. Replying to some requirement of the latter, the poet expresses his resolve to renounce all the favors which he had received, if gratitude should demand in return any sacrifice of his freedom of thought and action. Among the epistles the most remarkable is that entitled *Ars Poetica*. It is addressed to the Pisos, and contains an outline of the history of the Greek drama.

In the following verses the poet reproves the ostentatious luxury which withdrew large tracts of land from the uses of agriculture to devote them to unproductive pleasure grounds :

ODE XV.

“ Gleaming on Baiæ’s golden shore,
Yon marble domes their sunny wings expand ;
And glittering villas crown the yellow strand ;
But ah ! its wealthy harvests wave no more,
The faithful ploughshare quits the encumbered land.
Mark yon broad lakes their glittering bosoms spread,
Wide, as the Lucrine wave, their waters sheen ;
And lo ! the solitary plane is seen,
Spreading its broad and fruitless boughs of green,
Where erst above the maple’s social head,
Laden with grapes, the tendrils wont to twine ;
And thou, thy purple clusters shed,
Oh ! Italy’s beloved vine !

How rich the balm Favonius breathes,
From banks with rose, and spicy myrtle set !
How fair his fragrant blossoms wreathes
Of the dark-eyed violet.
But, ah ! the sons of joy forget
(Who the fierce splendors of the summer sky,
In the green depth of laurel groves defy) ;

How autumn's ripening hand was wont to pour
 The orchard fruits from every golden tree,
 And o'er the ruddy fallows smiled to see
 The olive drop its fat and mellow shower.

How stern old Cato's shaggy brows would bend ;
 How darkly glare our founder's angry look ;
 For ill could they, the conscript fathers, brook
 To see yon marble porticos extend,
 Wooing the north his breezy shades to lend,
 From many a mountain nook.

The green turf was their humble bed,
 Their costliest canopy the wild-wood tree ;
 While its rich breast the marble quarry spread,
 And high the temple reared its stately head
 In honor of the deity."

—MITFORD.

ODE XXIV.—TO VIRGIL.

' Wherefore restrain the tender tear ?
 Why blush to weep for one so dear ?
 Sweet muse, of melting voice and lyre
 Do thou the mournful song inspire.
 Quintilius—sunk to endless rest,
 With Death's eternal sleep oppressed !
 Oh ! when shall Faith, of soul sincere,
 Of Justice pure the sister fair,
 And Modesty, unspotted maid,
 And Truth, in artless guise arrayed,
 Among the race of human kind
 An equal to Quintilius find ?
 How did the good, the virtuous mourn
 And pour their sorrows o'er the urn ?
 But Virgil ! thine the loudest strain ;
 Yet all thy pious grief is vain.
 In vain dost thou the gods implore
 Thy love, Quintilius, to restore ;
 Whom on far other terms they gave,
 By nature fated to the grave.
 What though thou canst the lyre command,
 And sweep its tones with softer hand
 Than Orpheus, whose harmonious song
 Once drew the listening trees along,

Yet ne'er returns the vital heat
 The shadowy form to animate
 For when the ghost-compelling god
 Forms his black troops with horrid rod,
 He will not, lenient to the breath
 Of prayer, unbar the gates of death.
 'Tis hard, but patience must endure
 And soothe the woes it cannot cure."

—FRANCIS.

ODE XIII.—TO THE BANDUSIAN FOUNT.

"Ye waves, that gushing fall with purest stream,
 Bandusian fount ! to whom the products sweet
 Of richest wines belong,
 And fairest flowers of spring ;
 To thee a chosen victim will I slay,
 A kid, who, glowing in lascivious youth,
 Just blooms with budding horn,
 And, in vain thought elate,
 Yet destines future war ; but ah ! too soon
 His reeking blood with crimson shall enrich
 Thy pure translucent flood,
 And tinge thy crystal clear.
 Thy sweet recess the sun in mid-day hour
 Can ne'er invade, thy streams the labored ox
 Refresh with cooling draught,
 And glad the wandering herds.
 Thy name shall shine, with endless honors graced,
 While on my shell I sing, the nodding oak,
 That o'er thy cavern deep
 Waves his embowering head."

—J. WARTON.

LIVY.

B.C. 59—A.D. 17.

Titus Livius was born at Patavium, now Padua. He received his education in his native city, where he led a tranquil life, undisturbed by the violent dissensions that followed the assassination of Julius Cæsar. He came to Rome during the reign of Augustus, and

enjoyed the favor and patronage of that emperor, who was content to overlook the historian's declared partiality for Pompey. Livy died in his native city, to which he had retired on the death of his imperial patron.

The only extant work of this author is his History of Rome, called by himself "*Annals*." It consisted of one hundred and forty-two books, of which thirty-five remain entire—of the rest we have only abridgments. If we consider Livy as a historian only, he is not entitled to any high praise. His work is little more than a historical romance; but for that very reason it was suited to the spirit of the time in which he wrote.

Rome was mistress of the world; conquest had completed its work; the horrors of civil war had passed, and there was, as yet, no symptom of decay. The Augustan rule, mild and paternal, encouraged art and refinement, and secured to all the blessing of a long-wished-for peace. It was a time when Rome, happy in a glorious present, might look back into the past, reviewing each step by which the wondrous fabric of her power had grown to overshadow the habitable earth. The Roman looked for panegyric rather than criticism, for a grand and thrilling narrative rather than an accurate record of events, and in these requirements Livy was the historian of the time. He wrote of Rome's greatness as a bard might sing at a joyous banquet, mingling various incidents, disaster, and success; but all tending to a happy consummation, to the glory of the race whose exploits were the subject of his lay.

At the time when Livy composed his *Annals*, there were still preserved in the Capitol three thousand

brazen tablets, on which were engraved authentic public records, dating back almost to the foundation of the city. The Annals of the Pontifex Maximus had been digested in eighty books, and records of the civil magistrates, equally authentic, were at his disposal. Incredible as it seems, Livy did not care to profit by the rich fund of material which lay ready prepared for his work. If he quotes from these records it is generally at second hand, making use of the investigations of more diligent writers; even this is done in a careless manner. When Polybius prepared to write of the invasion of Hannibal, he traversed himself the passes by which the Carthaginian entered Italy. Livy follows his account, but so negligently that he makes Hannibal to have crossed by the *Alpis Cotta* instead of by the *Alpis Graia*, or *Little St. Bernard*. It is unnecessary to say that Livy is everywhere a Roman, and that facts must be stubborn indeed when he is obliged to leave his countrymen in fault.

Of his love for legends we cannot speak severely. They were generally founded on popular tradition, and are so charmingly told, that we would not blame the historian who has added this harmless romance to his more serious annals.

With the defects of which we have spoken, Livy is still one of the most attractive of historians. His style is almost faultless. There is a life and freshness about his descriptions, and the reader will always sympathize in the enthusiasm with which he relates the wonderful story of his country's fortunes.

TIBULLUS.

54-18 B. C.

Albius Tibullus was a Roman knight, the friend and familiar companion of Horace, Ovid, and other writers. During the civil troubles, he served under Brutus and Cassius, and was engaged in the battle of Philippi, after which, despairing of the Republic, he retired to his country-seat at Pedum. In this peaceful retreat the poet spent the best and happiest days of a brief life, occupied principally in literary pursuits.

The verses of Tibullus, although tainted by the corrupt spirit of his age, are admired for an easy and flowing simplicity. This appears particularly in the passages which treat of domestic affection or of the love of nature and of country life. Horace thus describes his friend in one of his Epistles :

“ Albius ! in whom my satires find
A critic, most sincere and kind,
What dost thou now on Pedan plains ?
Write verse, outvying Cassius’ strains ?
Steal, silent, through the healthful wood,
With thoughts that fit the wise and good ?
Thou art not body without mind ;
The gods to thee a form assigned,
But form with sense and worth combined ;
Have given thee wealth, with art to know
How best to use what they bestow,
Then what could fondest nurse—what more—
For her dear foster-child—implore,
Of wit and eloquence possést,
In health, grace, fame, and station blest,
A hospitable board, with friends,
And means sufficient for his ends ? ”

—Book I., Epistle IV.

PROPERTIUS.

52-14 B.C.

There is but little known of the life of this poet. He was a friend of Tibullus, and the verses of both writers bearing the same general character, critics have instituted comparisons between them, varying, as now one, or now the other, may be preferred.

OVID.

B.C. 43-19 A.D.

Ovidius Naso was born at Sulmo (now Sulmona), a town about ninety miles from Rome, in the year rendered so sadly memorable by the murder of Cicero. The father of the poet belonged to an equestrian family, and as his estates devolved necessarily upon his eldest son, he desired that the second should apply himself to the study of eloquence, the profession of a pleader being then the surest road to wealth.

Ovid attained some success as an orator, although his eloquence was never of a high order. His older brother dying, he found himself in a position of ease and even affluence, and profited by the circumstance to renounce the bar and the tumult of public life. Ovid now devoted himself to literary pursuits with a success which surpassed his fondest expectations. His verses were sung in the streets—recited in the theatres amid bursts of applause; and he enjoyed with these popular triumphs the favor of Augustus and the friendship of the greatest men of Rome. His hours of retirement were spent, sometimes in a charming villa near his native town, but more fre-

quently in a splendid mansion on the Capitoline Hill.

Unhappily, the popular poet, not content with the nobler pleasures of fame and friendship, plunged without restraint into all the vices and dissipation of which the great capital was the centre. It does not appear that this conduct had any influence in depriving him of the favor of the emperor. His sudden and terrible fall has been ascribed to various causes, and much ingenious conjecture has been wasted upon the subject. Some have supposed that he was involuntarily a witness of disorders in the emperor's family, and that the sentence of banishment was the penalty of some indiscretion on the subject. This view is supported by certain expressions of the poet, in writing from his place of exile. He speaks of his offence as a "folly," "an involuntary error." Others have attributed his disgrace to the enmity of Tiberius; but all are agreed that the reason given by the emperor to the Senate—the immorality of the poet's verses—was a pretext which was not even intended to deceive.

In the decree of banishment there was one mitigating circumstance: the estates of Ovid were not confiscated. In every other respect the sentence was executed with the utmost severity. The desolate village of Tomi (Temiswar), situated near the mouth of the Danube, where the Scythian desert stretches down to the Euxine, was the appointed abode of the gay and luxurious poet. One wretched night was allowed for preparation. In vain the faithful wife pleaded for permission to share her husband's exile; her request was harshly denied. The unhappy poet was utterly dismayed by the blow which had fallen so unexpectedly upon him, and the friends who had

assembled for a last farewell strove in vain to arouse in him some display of that firmness which was so seldom wanting in a Roman. After a night of irresolution, Ovid departed at break of day, his dress disordered, and with dishevelled hair. A toilsome journey brought him to the spot of whose horrors he has left us a graphic picture in the letters, appropriately called *Tristia*, which he addressed to various friends.

The barbarians with whom Ovid was now obliged to associate were dressed in the skins of wild beasts, while their shaggy locks and untrimmed beards lent an added horror to their aspect. The fields were without grain; no vines clad the mountain sides; trees even were wanting, and a stunted growth of absinthum (wormwood) was all that relieved the nakedness of the dreary plain. In this abode the life of Ovid was protracted for nine years. Every effort to soften the anger of Augustus proved utterly fruitless. On the accession of Tiberius, the unhappy exile endeavored by abject supplications to obtain, if not pardon, a change of abode which might be a mitigation of his sufferings. He even wrote a poem to celebrate the apotheosis of Augustus, and erected a temple in which he offered incense to the deceased emperor.

Tiberius proved implacable, and the constitution of Ovid, enervated by a life of voluptuous ease, succumbed under the weight of bodily and mental suffering. His last wish was that his remains might be carried to Rome; but even this was denied. He was laid in Scythian soil, and the barbarous Getæ raised a monument to mark the spot.

To the private character of Ovid we have already alluded. It has left its impress on all his works, particularly on the earlier productions, which Augustus

made a merit of removing from the public libraries. Of these poems, with their defects and beauties, it is not necessary now to speak. The fame of Ovid rests entirely on the *Metamorphoses*, a work which he probably composed between his fortieth and fiftieth years. It consists of stories of transformations drawn from Greek and Roman mythology, with perhaps some intermingling of Latin and Etruscan fables. The poet, beginning with a description of primeval Chaos and of the Creation, gives a history of the Four Ages and of Deucalion's Flood, etc. He then continues the mythological story in a series of episodes, each involving some transformation, until the work closes with the metamorphosis of Julius Cæsar into a star.

This poem is distinguished by an endless variety of scene and incident; there is at times an over-luxuriance of thought and expression, but the comparisons of the poet are always pleasing, and his descriptions are equally admirable whether he places before our eyes the palace of the Sun, or depicts the humble cottage of Philémon. The *Metamorphoses* had not yet received the last touches of the author's hand when he received the decree of exile. In the first tumult of despair, he committed the manuscript to the flames. Other copies existed in the possession of friends, and thus was preserved the only production of Ovid whose loss the world might reasonably regret.

CREATION OF THE WORLD.

“Of bodies changed to various forms I sing :
Ye gods, from whom these miracles did spring,
Inspire my numbers with celestial heat,
Till I my long laborious work complete ;
And add perpetual tenor to my rhymes,
Deduced from Nature's birth to Cæsar's times.

Before the seas, and this terrestrial ball,
 And heaven's high canopy that covers all,
 One was the face of Nature ; if a face ;
 Rather a rude and indigested mass ;
 A lifeless lump, unfashioned and unframed,
 Of jarring seeds, and justly Chaos named.
 No sun was lighted up the world to view,
 No moon did yet her blunted horns renew.
 Nor yet was earth suspended in the sky,
 Nor poised, did on her own foundations lie,
 Nor seas about the shores their arms had thrown ;
 But earth, and air, and water were in one.
 Thus air was void of light, and earth unstable,
 And water's dark abyss unnavigable.
 No certain form on any was impressed ;
 All were confused, and each disturbed the rest.
 But God, or Nature while they thus contend,
 To these intestine discords put an end.
 Then earth from air, and seas from earth, were driven,
 And grosser air sunk from ethereal heaven.
 The force of fire ascended first on high,
 And took its dwelling in the vaulted sky ;
 Then air succeeds, in lightness next to fire,
 Whose atoms from inactive earth retire ;
 Earth sinks beneath, and draws a numerous throng
 Of ponderous, thick, unwieldly seeds along,
 About her coasts unruly waters roar,
 And, rising on a ridge, insult the shore."

—*DRYDEN*.

CREATION OF MAN.

"A creature of a more exalted kind
 Was wanting yet, and then was man designed ;
 Conscious of thought, of more capacious breast,
 For empire formed, and fit to rule the rest :
 Whether with particles of heavenly fire
 The God of nature did his soul inspire,
 Or earth, but now divided from the sky,
 And pliant, still retained the ethereal energy,
 Which wise Prometheus tempered into paste,
 And, mixed with living streams, the godlike image cast.
 Thus, while the mute creation downward bend
 Their sight, and to their earthly mother tend,

Man looks aloft, and with erected eyes
Beholds his own hereditary skies.
From such rude principles our form began,
And earth was metamorphosed into man."

—*Ibid.*

HOUSE OF SLEEP.

"Deep in a cavern dwells the drowsy god,
Whose gloomy mansion, nor the rising sun,
Nor setting, visits, nor the lightsome noon :
But lazy vapors round the region fly,
Perpetual twilight, and a doubtful sky ;
No crowing cock does there his wings display,
Nor with his horny bill provoke the day,
Nor watchful dogs, nor the more wakeful geese,
Disturb with nightly noise the sacred peace,
Nor beasts of nature, nor the tame are nigh,
Nor trees with tempests rocked, nor human cry,
But safe repose, without an air of breath,
Dwells here, and a dumb quiet next to death.
An arm of Lethe, with a gentle flow,
Arising upwards from the rock below,
The palace moats, and o'er the pebbles creeps,
And with soft murmurs calls the coming sleeps.
Around its entry nodding poppies grow,
And all cool simples that sweet rest bestow ;
Night from the plants their sleepy virtue drains,
And passing, sheds it on the silent plains.
No door there was, the unguarded house to keep,
On creaking hinges turned, to break his sleep.
But in a gloomy court was raised a bed,
Stuffed with black plumes, and on an ebon 'stead ;
Black was the covering too, where lay the god,
And slept supine, his limbs displayed abroad,
About his head fantastic visions fly,
Which various images of things supply,
And mock their forms, the leaves on trees not more,
Nor bearded ears in fields, nor sands upon the shore,
The virgin entering bright, indulged the day
To the brown cave, and brushed the dreams away."

—*Ibid.*

PLINY THE ELDER.

23-79 A.D.

(Secundus Caius Plinius, a distinguished naturalist and historian, was born of a noble family in the ninth year of the reign of Tiberius, A.D. 23.

(Pliny was educated at Rome, where he enjoyed every advantage that the capital afforded.) At the age of twenty-two he went to Africa, where he resided some time. While yet young, he (served in the Roman army in Germany,) and held a command in the cavalry under Lucius Pomponius. (In the intervals of military service he explored the country as far as the sources of the Danube and the German Ocean.) At this time, also, Pliny (wrote his first work, a treatise on the use of the javelin by cavalry) (*De Jaculatione Equestri*). He afterwards (practised as a pleader at the Roman bar); but it would seem that he (retired from public life during the reign of Nero,) and resided at Comum his birthplace, where the Plinian family had large estates. Here he (superintended the education of his nephew, and devoted himself to literary pursuits.)

It is doubtful at what period Pliny received the appointment of procurator of Spain; but it seems probable that he remained in that county during the civil wars of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, and the first years of Vespasian. We learn from his works that he resided some time in the south of Gaul.

In the year A.D. 79 Pliny was at Misenum, being in command of the Roman fleet on that coast. On the afternoon of the 24th of August, his sister Plinia (mother of Pliny the Younger) called his attention to

a cloud of unusual form and size, which rose, as they ascertained later, from the summit of Mt Vesuvius.* Earthquakes were frequent in the neighborhood ; but there seems to have been no record, either from history or tradition, of any eruption of the mountain itself.

Pliny wished to view the phenomenon nearer, and ordered a light vessel to be got in readiness that he might cross the bay. As he was about to sail, he received intelligence of the danger of some friends, whose villa lay at the foot of the mountain. He resolved, therefore, to go to the rescue of these, and of others who were exposed to equal danger, there being no means of escape unless by sea. He landed near the mountain ; and the next day, (while endeavoring, regardless of personal danger, to conduct a party of fugitives to embark, he was overcome by the sulphurous vapor and fell dead on the shore.) His body was discovered three days later, uninjured, and in a posture more resembling sleep than death.

Pliny wrote much ; but the only work of any importance which remains to us is (a natural history in thirty-seven books.) This work displays a vast amount of research, but little discrimination.) There is an entire absence of scientific arrangement ; and truth and fable are mingled in a manner which destroys the authority of the whole.) When the reader has been entertained with accounts of Martichori (animals with human heads and the tails of scorpions), etc., etc., he is less inclined to rely on the details given of more ordinary creatures.

Pliny is more interesting when he treats of philosophical subjects ; he is always grave and dignified,

* The towns of Herculaneum and Pompeii were buried during this eruption.

and shows everywhere a horror of cruelty and baseness, and a profound contempt for the spirit of luxury which caused such deep corruption among the Roman people.)

An extract from a letter of the younger Pliny will give some idea of his application to study :

“From the twenty-third of August he began to study at midnight, and through the winter he continued to rise at one, or latest at two in the morning, and often at twelve. Sleep he could always command; it used often to come upon him and leave him in the midst of his books. Before daybreak he would go to the Emperor Vespasian, who also worked at night, and thence to his official duties. On returning home he gave what time remained to study. After taking a light meal, as our forefathers used to do, he would often in summer, if he had leisure, recline in the sun, and have a book read to him. (He read nothing without making extracts; for he used to say you could get some good from the worst book.) After reading in the sun he generally had a cold bath, then a light meal, and a very short nap, after which, as if he were beginning another day, he would study till dinner time. During dinner a book was read to him, and he made notes upon it as it went on. I remember one of his friends once stopping the reader, who had pronounced a word incorrectly, and making him repeat it. My uncle said to him: ‘Did you not understand the word?’ ‘Yes,’ he replied. ‘Why then did you stop him? We have lost more than ten lines by this interruption.’ While travelling he threw aside every care and gave himself up to study; a secretary always attended him in his chariot, with a book and writing-tablets. Even in Rome he used with the same view to be carried in a litter. I remember he once rebuked me for taking a walk. ‘You might,’ said he, ‘have managed not to lose those hours.’ It was by this intense application that he completed so great a number of books, and left me, besides, a hundred and sixty volumes of extracts, written on both sides of the leaf and in the minutest hand.”

PLINY THE YOUNGER.

62-116 A.D.

(Caius Plinius Cæcilius Secundus, nephew of the preceding, was born at Comum, A.D. 62.) His father, Caius Cæcilius, died while he was yet a child, and his education was conducted by his uncle, who inspired him with no small share of his own taste for literary pursuits.)

Pliny was in his eighteenth year at the time of his uncle's death. He describes the terrible scenes attendant on the great eruption in one of his letters, from which we take the following extract.

He had refused to accompany his uncle on his expedition across the bay, not wishing to interrupt the studies in which he was engaged. After speaking of the terrors of the ensuing night, he thus describes his flight with his mother from Misenum :

“When we were clear of the buildings, we stopped. Then we had to endure the sight of many marvellous, many dreadful things. The chariots which we had directed to be brought out moved about in opposite directions, though the ground was perfectly level ; even when scotched with stones they did not remain in the same place. Besides this, we saw the sea retire into itself, seeming to be driven back by the trembling movement of the earth. The shore had distinctly advanced, and many marine animals were left high and dry upon the sands. Behind us was a dark and dreadful cloud, which, as it was broken by rapid zigzag flashes, revealed behind it variously shaped masses of flame : these last were like sheet lightning, though on a larger scale. Then our friend from Spain addressed us more urgently than ever. ‘If your brother,’ he said, ‘if your uncle is alive, he wishes you to be saved ; if he has perished, he certainly wished you to survive him. If so, why do you hesitate to escape ?’ We answered that we could not endure to think of our own safety while we

were doubtful of his. He stayed for no more, but rushed off, speeding from the danger. It was not long before the cloud we had seen began to descend upon the earth and cover the sea. It had already surrounded the island of Capræa, and had shut from our view the promontory of Misenum. My mother urged, besought, even commanded me to fly as best I could. I might do so, she said, for I was young ; she, from age and corpulence, could move but slowly ; but she would die content if she did not bring death on me. I replied that I would not seek safety except in her company. I clasped her hand, and compelled her to go with me. She yielded reluctantly, and reproached herself continually for delaying me. Ashes began to fall ; but, as yet, in small quantities. I looked behind me ; a heavy, dark mist seemed to be following us, spreading itself over the country like a cloud. ‘Let us turn out of the way,’ I said, ‘whilst we can still see, lest we be trodden under foot by the throngs that accompany us. We had scarcely sat down, when night was upon us ;—not such as we have when there is no moon, nor when the sky is cloudy, but such as there is in some closed room, when the lights are extinguished. You might hear the shrieks of women, the monotonous wailing of children, the shouts of men. Many were raising their voices, and seeking to recognize by the voices that replied, parents, children, husbands, or wives. Some were loudly lamenting their own fate, others were mourning for their friends. Some even prayed for death, in the fear of what they prayed for. Many lifted their hands in prayer to the gods ; more were convinced that there were no gods at all, and that the final endless night of which we have heard had come upon the world. It grew somewhat light, a proof that fire was approaching ; but it stopped at a considerable distance. Then came darkness again, and a heavy fall of ashes. Again and again we stood up and shook them off ; otherwise we should have been covered by them, and even crushed by the weight. I might boast that in so great a peril not a sigh, not a word of fear escaped me ; had I not been convinced that I was perishing in company with the universe, and the universe with me,—a miserable, and yet a mighty solace in death.”

Pliny appeared as a pleader at the Roman bar at the early age of nineteen. / He was already admired for the eloquence which seems to have been his most

striking gift.) He served as tribune in Syria, and held later many important offices. During the reign of Domitian, Pliny had the grief to see the best and noblest men in Rome, many of them his intimate friends, sacrificed to the rage of the tyrant. (Fearing to share their fate, he left Rome and passed several years in retirement.) A passage in one of his letters informs us of the manner in which he sought consolation :

“I find my joy and my solace in literature. There is no gladness that this cannot increase, no sorrow that it cannot lessen. Troubled as I am by the ill-health of my wife, by the dangerous condition—sometimes, alas ! by the death—of my friends, I fly to my studies as the one alleviation of my fears. They do me this service—they make me understand my troubles better, and bear them more patiently.”

Notwithstanding the effort which Pliny made to avoid the suspicions of Domitian, he was denounced for some imaginary crime, and his life was saved only by the death of that emperor, which occurred A.D. 96. Nerva and Trajan recalled him to public life, and he filled the office of administrator of the public treasury. During this time he writes to a friend :

“I am occupied by the duties of my office, a most important and a most troublesome one. I sit in front of the tribunal; I countersign documents; I settle accounts; I write a vast amount of the most illiterate literature.”

Pliny was in his forty-second year when he was appointed by Trajan to the government of Bithynia. His letters to the emperor, and the replies of that prince, prove the extent to which centralization was carried in the Roman empire. It has been thought that the manner in which Pliny consults and reports on every detail shows him to have been deficient in

strength of character and self-reliance. It is more reasonable to suppose that he knew his master, and conducted the government according to his instructions. Of this minute supervision we have a curious example. A destructive fire had occurred in Nicomediá, and Pliny observed that there were no proper arrangements for supplying water, or contending in any way against the progress of the flames. He drew up the plan of a regular fire company, to be limited to one hundred and fifty members. This project, submitted duly to the emperor, was condemned. Trajan observes that there is always danger in organizations, whatever the original design may be.

(We cannot omit noticing the celebrated letter in which Pliny consults Trajan as to the action to be taken with regard to the Christians ; a question which, as he says, extends to persons of all ranks and ages, and even of both sexes. He seems inclined to moderation, and informs the emperor that he could discover nothing against the Christians more than an absurd and excessive superstition. He says, that to every interrogatory, *even under torture*,

“ They affirmed that the whole of their guilt, or their error was, that they met on a certain stated day, before it was light, and addressed themselves in a form of prayer to Christ, as to some God, binding themselves by a solemn oath, not for the purposes of any wicked design, but never to commit any fraud, theft, or adultery ; never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up ; after which, it was their custom to separate and then reassemble, to partake in common of an innocent repast.”

The reply of Trajan is hardly consistent with his character for justice or wisdom. He advises Pliny not to have any search made for Christians, but to punish them when denounced before his tribunal. He

adds, however, a praiseworthy caution against anonymous accusers.

It is supposed that Pliny died A.D. 110,) in the forty-ninth year of his age. (He is chiefly known to us by his letters, selected and published by himself. The studied, and sometimes even affected style of these, seems to show that they were intended for posterity rather than for the individuals to whom they were addressed. They contain, however, much that is interesting; and (excepting Cicero, there is no other writer who makes us so familiar with the manners and customs of the Romans, their social habits, and the details of private life, particularly among the higher classes.)

We find more than one curious notice of the public readings with which the Roman authors were accustomed to favor their friends before the publication of any work. Books were much cheaper in the time of Pliny than during the middle ages, when learning was slowly reviving from the ruin brought about by the inroads of the barbarians. Still, when we remember that all books were in manuscript, written without punctuation marks, capitals, or any separation between the words, we can understand that to read at first sight, with ease and fluency, required a fair degree of practice. (Hence authors were wont to introduce their works to the public by reading, either the whole or a selected portion, to as large an audience as they could conveniently assemble.)

Men of opulence, like Pliny, gave readings in their own houses; those whose dwellings were not sufficiently spacious, were accommodated in the house of some wealthy patron. There were many at Rome distinguished by their kindness in this respect. Pliny informs us that a certain patrician not only lends a

suitable room, but that he takes care to furnish it for the occasion, to fill the outer benches with his own freedmen, and to place here and there loud-voiced friends ready to applaud.

In two of Pliny's letters, we have a minute description of his summer and winter villas ; in others we learn the manner in which he and his friends passed their leisure in these elegant retreats.

Pliny expresses much contempt for the vulgar display made at Rome by men newly enriched, often by the most dishonorable means. At a certain entertainment which he was obliged to attend, he and other persons of rank were served with the rarest wines, and the most luxurious viands ; simpler fare was placed before the less distinguished guests ; while the freedmen, who occupied the lower end of the hall, had to be content with sour wine and unpalatable food. To a question addressed to Pliny by one of those present, he replied that at his table all fared alike ; that when he invited his freedmen to dine, he forgot their former condition, and remembered only that they were his guests.

The house of Pliny was a favorite resort of the literary men of Rome, and his entertainments owed much of their charm to the easy cordiality of the host, and the intellectual conversation which enlivened the repast. Pliny says to a friend who had absented himself from a dinner : " I will bring an action against you, and I will lay my damages at a very high amount ; " and again in the same letter : " You may have a more splendid and expensive dinner in many houses ; there is not one in which you can dine with more cheerful accompaniments, and feel yourself more at ease than in mine."

Pliny was a devoted husband, a kind master, and a generous patron. His second wife, Calpurnia, was a graceful and accomplished woman. She studied after her marriage, that she might sympathize in her husband's tastes; and she was, as may be supposed, among his most enthusiastic admirers. We learn from one of his letters that she would never consent to lose a word of his public readings. Screened by a curtain where she could see and listen unobserved, she watched the countenances of the auditors, and drank in with rapture the frequent bursts of applause.

Pliny was an able and successful pleader, and his services were sought in the most important causes. After the death of Domitian, he showed no little courage by insisting on the prosecution of the more infamous among the public informers. In taking this course, he was equally influenced by a sense of public justice, and a desire to avenge the death of his friends who had perished by their means.

(We cannot ascribe to the younger Pliny the eloquence of Cicero, nor the genius of the greater authors of his country; but we have dwelt with pleasure on his character, because it presents to us the most finished type of the Roman gentleman,—one who would be acknowledged as such among the highest and noblest of any age or country.

SUETONIUS.

J. C. Paulinus Suetonius, a distinguished commander. He was the first Roman general who crossed Mt. Atlas with an army. He wrote a history of his African campaign.

Tranquillus Suetonius, a Roman historian, contemporary and friend of the younger Pliny. By his favor he was advanced to office under the Emperor Trajan; he also served for some time as secretary to Adrian. The principal work of this writer is a biography of the first twelve Cæsars. St. Jerome remarks that Suetonius traces the characters of these princes “with the same freedom with which they lived.” His style is simple and correct, but without ornament.

STATIUS.

FLOURISHED A.D. 85.

(Publius Papinius Statius, a Latin epic poet, was born at Naples, A.D. 61. His father, who was himself a poet, taught literature at Naples, but went afterwards to Rome, where he became one of the preceptors of the young Domitian. This prince conceived a friendship for the son of his tutor; and we have among the poems of Statius a complimentary effusion addressed to Domitian, on the erection of an equestrian statue in his honor.)

While still very young, Statius composed a tragedy called *Agave*; but was induced by poverty to sell the production to Paris, a famous comedian, and a favorite of Domitian, who brought it out as his own composition. Statius married, at the age of nineteen, Claudia, the daughter of a musician. She was a woman of considerable attainments, and the poet always speaks of her in terms of respect and affection. Disgusted with the luxury and vices of the Romans, Statius retired to a small estate near Naples, where he died the following year, A.D. 96.)

This poet acquired great reputation at Rome by his

skill in composing extemporaneously on every variety of subject. He has left an epic poem called *Thebais*, and the first portion of another, *Achilles*, which he did not live to complete. (The *Thebais* is founded on the story of the sons of *Œdipus*, a subject already treated by the greatest among the classic poets. With these, Statius could not hope to compete. Juvenal, nevertheless, speaks of his poem with commendation :

“When Statius fixed a morning to recite
His *Thebaïd* to the town, with what delight
They flocked to hear ! with what fond rapture hung
On the sweet strains made sweeter by his tongue.”)

His productions are graceful, and display much skill in versification ; but wanted the fire of true genius :

STATIUS TO HIS WIFE, ON HIS PROPOSED
RETIREMENT TO NAPLES.

“Say, why those gentle looks should changed appear ?
Why hangs the cloud upon that forehead clear ?
Is it, that thoughts of Naples move my breast,
And native fields invite my age to rest ?
But wherefore sad ? No wanton lightness thine ;
Not to the cirque thy fond regrets incline,
Beat by the rapid race ; nor shouts, that roll
From the thronged theatre, pervade thy soul.
But the cool shade of life is dear to thee ;
Joys undegrading ; modest probity.
Whither could ocean’s waves my bark convey,
Nor thou be found companion of my way ?
Yes—did I seek to fix my mansion drear
Where polar ice congeals th’ inclement year ;
Where the seas darken round far Thule’s isle ;
Or unapproached recedes the head of Nile ;
Thy voice would cheer me on. May that kind Power,
Who joined our hands when in thy beauty’s flower,
Still, when the blooming years of life decline,
Prolong the blessing, and preserve thee mine !”

QUINTUS CURTIUS.

FLOURISHED IN FIRST OR SECOND CENTURY OF OUR ERA.

This writer has left a work entitled "Exploits of Alexander the Great." It consisted originally of ten books, but the first two and portions of the fifth and sixth are now lost. Quintus Curtius is an entertaining and agreeable writer ; the speeches with which he diversifies his narrative are models of their kind, and his descriptions are also much admired. As a historian, nevertheless, he is but little regarded. He seems to care nothing for truth or accuracy, copying indiscriminately whatever accounts he had at hand, without making any effort to reconcile their contradictions ; his ignorance of geography leads him also into grave errors.

Of the life of Quintus Curtius nothing is known, and the time in which he wrote is still a matter of conjecture.

MARTIAL.

Marcus Valerius Martialis, a Latin epigrammatic poet, born at Bilbilis, in Spain, about 40 A.D. He was favored by Titus and Domitian, and enjoyed, like many other literary men, the friendship of Pliny the Younger. By his liberality Martial was enabled to gratify his desire of returning to his native country, where, having made a wealthy marriage, he spent the remainder of his life.

The epigrams of this poet approach nearly to the modern idea of that species of composition, as **they**

terminate with a point for which is reserved all the edge and keenness of the satire.

TO ONE WHO HAD SCOFFED AT THE POVERTY
OF THE POET.

“Yes,—I am poor, Callistratus ! I own ;
And so was ever ; yet not quite unknown,
Graced with a knight’s degree ; nor this alone ;
But through the world my verse is frequent sung ;
And ‘ That is he ! ’ sounds buzzed from every tongue ;
And what to few, when dust, the Fates assign,
In bloom and freshness of my days is mine.
Thy ceilings on a hundred columns rest ;
Wealth, as of upstart freeman, bursts thy chest :
Nile flows in fatness o’er thy ample fields ;
Cisalpine Gaul thy silky fleeces yields ;
Lo ! Such thou art, and such am I ; like me,
Callistratus ! thou canst not hope to be ;
A hundred of the crowd resemble thee.”

TACITUS.

BORN ABOUT 51 A.D.

Of the family of this historian nothing is known. He married the daughter of Julius Agricola, to whom he alludes, in speaking of their betrothal, as “ a maiden of noble promise.” ; As far as we can gather from his writings, his marriage and his domestic relations generally were happy.)

The public life of Tacitus began during the later years of Vespasian ; in the reigns which followed, he held successively the highest offices of the State. The last mention which we find of him is in connection with the trial of Marius Priscus, proconsul of Africa. Tacitus and the younger Pliny were associated as prosecutors of this corrupt and tyrannical governor.

It is probable that Tacitus devoted the latter years

of his life to literary labor.) (His extant works are a *Life of Agricola*; "*Germany*," a *Treatise on the Manners, Customs, etc.*, of the different Germanic Tribes, and a portion of a work entitled "*History*." This commences with the accession of Galba, A.D. 69, and continues to the death of Domitian, A.D., 96. Another historical work, entitled "*Annals*," embraces the period from the death of Augustus, A.D. 14, to that of Nero, A.D. 68. We have remaining about eight of the sixteen books of the *Annals*.)

The *Life of Agricola* has been much admired, and the concluding passages are in the historian's best style. After drawing a picture of the last hours of Agricola, and paying a just tribute to the love and tenderness of his noble wife Decidiana, Tacitus expresses the grief which he and his wife experienced at their absence from the closing scene. He proceeds as follows :

"If there is any dwelling-place for the spirits of the just ; if, as the wise believe, noble souls do not perish with the body, rest thou in peace ; and call us, thy family, from weak regrets and womanish laments to the contemplation of thy virtues, for which we must not weep nor beat the breast. Let us honor thee not so much with transitory praises as with our reverence ; and, if our powers permit us, with our emulation. That will be true respect, that the true affection of thy nearest kin. This, too, is what I would enjoin on the daughter and wife,—to honor the memory of such a father, such a husband, by pondering in their hearts all his words and acts, by cherishing the features and lineaments of his character rather than those of his person. . . . Whatever we loved, whatever we admired in Agricola, still survives, and will survive in the hearts of men, in the succession of the ages, in the fame that waits on noble deeds."*

(The *Germany* of Tacitus gives an account of the

manners and customs of the Teutonic races, and he executes his task in such a manner as to suggest continually a comparison between their simple life and barbaric virtue, and the luxury and vices of his own countrymen. This aim probably gave a coloring to the work, and led Tacitus to paint the state of society among those rude tribes in a manner hardly to be reconciled with the truth of history. He acknowledges, nevertheless, certain failings to which these barbarians were addicted, particularly gambling and drunkenness. Regarding the account to which they turned this latter propensity, he gives the following curious information :

“It is at their feasts that they generally consult on the reconciliation of enemies, on the forming of matrimonial alliances, on the choice of chiefs, finally even on peace and war ; for they think that at no time is the mind more open to simplicity of purpose, or more warmed to noble aspirations. A race without either natural or acquired cunning, they disclose their hidden thoughts in the freedom of festivity. Thus the sentiments of all having been discovered, and laid bare, the discussion is renewed on the following day, and from each occasion its own peculiar advantage is derived. They deliberate when they have no power to dissemble ; they resolve when error is impossible.”

In the *History* and the *Annals* we have a narrative of periods so marked by crime, conspiracy, and cruelty, that a writer less calm and impartial than Tacitus would have been hurried away by his indignation, and history would have degenerated into denunciation. That this has not been the case we see by his keen analysis of character, and the just reflections which he mingles with the narrative of events. Tacitus published his historical works during the reign of Trajan, when men were permitted a freedom of speech unknown under the preceding emperors.

QUINTILIAN.

42-120 A.D.

Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, a celebrated rhetorician, was born at Calagurris, a city of Spain. After the death of Nero he was brought to Rome by his father, who was professor of rhetoric in that city. Quintilian followed the same pursuits, and opened a school during the reign of Vespasian. Among his pupils were Pliny the Younger, and Flavia Domitilla, the niece of Domitian. The latter, being converted to the Christian faith, suffered banishment under that emperor.

Quintilian was raised by Domitian to the senatorial rank, being permitted to wear the laticlave or distinguishing dress of that order. After teaching rhetoric for twenty years, he retired from public life and died about the year 120 A.D.

Quintilian has left one work, Institutes of Oratory, a treatise on the rhetorical art, which has been of itself sufficient to immortalize his memory. It is preferred to the essay of Cicero upon the same subject, as it contains not theories only, but the result of a long course of practical experience.

 JUVENAL.

A.D. 40-120.

Decimus Junius Juvenalis, the last and the greatest of the Roman satirists, was born about the year 40 B.C., it is supposed in the little Volscian town, famous later as the birth-place of St. Thomas

Aquinas. According to Suetonius, he was the son, or adopted son, of a wealthy freedman.

We know but little of the life of this poet. His first satire, written for private circulation among his friends, was directed against Paris, an actor of pantomime, and a favorite of Domitian. The success of this effort turned the attention of Juvenal to this species of composition, but the greater part of his sixteen satires were written, or at least published, during the reign of Trajan. / It is said that the Emperor Adrian, who had taken a certain comedian into favor, considered the satire against Paris as reflecting on himself. He sent the poet into honorable banishment, according to some, naming him for an important post in Syene Egypt, according to others, assigning as the place of exile one of the Oases. Juvenal is supposed to have died soon after, about the eighty-second year of his age.)

The picture of Roman manners given by this poet is most appalling. Natural religion, which had preserved public and private morality in the early days of the Republic, was corrupted by superstition until it lost its hold upon the minds of men, and was succeeded by general unbelief. The people, degraded as we have seen, were bought and sold by largesses and public entertainments. Comedians and dancers disposed of the highest offices in the state, and the city swarmed with informers, to whom the best and noblest among the patricians became an easy prey. The virtuous had no power to protect one another, while the guilty were strong in the confederacy of crime. From the frequency and facility of divorce, the family had almost ceased to exist, and the morals of the female sex were in general as depraved as those of the

men. If the violence of the latter rendered the streets of Rome more dangerous than the forest, the art of poisoning was no less a peril at the domestic board. The liberty allowed to Roman women was, in better days, at once a proof of their virtue, and its safeguard. It served now to render their vices more conspicuous, and there was no public spectacle so cruel or so immoral as not to be disgraced by their presence.

Well might the poet exclaim :

“ For now an age has come, that teems with crimes
Beyond all precedent of former times ;
An age so bad, that nature cannot frame
A metal base enough to give it name.”

Against such a society Juvenal composed his satires. Pleasantry was impossible, even had the stern temper of the poet permitted him to write in such a vein. He was filled, on the contrary, with an indignation which carried all before it, and there is at times a terrible grandeur in the vehemence of his denunciations.

Perhaps the most amiable of the compositions of Juvenal is his Invitation to Persicus, from which we give the following :

“ Enough ; to-day my Persicus shall see
Whether my precepts with my life agree.
For since by promise you are now my guest,
Know, I invite you to no sumptuous feast,
But to such simple fare as long, long since,
The good Evander gave the Trojan prince.
Come then, my friend, you will not sure despise
The food that pleased an offspring of the skies ;
Come, and while fancy brings past times to view,
I'll think myself the king, the hero you.
Take now your bill of fare ; my simple board
Is with no dainties from the market stored

But dishes, all my own. From Tiber's stock
A kid shall come, the fattest of the flock,
With more of milk than blood ; and pullets drest
With new-laid eggs, yet tepid from the nest ;
And sperage wild, which from the mountain's side
My housemaid left her spindle to provide ;
And grapes long kept, yet pulpy still and fair ;
And the rich Signian, and the Syrian pear ;
And apples, that in flavor and in smell
The boasted Ricene equal or excel.
How homely this ! and yet this homely fare
A senator would once have counted rare ;
When the good Curius thought it no disgrace,
O'er a few sticks a little pot to place,
With herbs by his small garden-plot supplied—
Food which the squalid wretch would now deride.
Look not to me for ivory ; I have none ;
My chess-board and my men are all of bone.
Nay, my knife-handles ; yet, my friend, for this,
My pullets neither cut nor taste amiss.
I boast no artist, tutored in the school
Of learned Trypherus, to carve by rule.
My simple lad, whose highest efforts rise
To broil a steak, in the plain country guise,
Knows no such art ; humbly content to serve,
And bring the dishes which he cannot kerve ;
Another lad (for I have two to-day),
Clad like the first in home-spun russet gray,
Shall fill our earthen bowls ; no Phrygian he,
No pampered attribute of luxury,
But a rude rustic,—when you want him, speak,
And speak in Latin, for he knows no Greek.
Both go alike, with close cropped hair, undrest,
But spruce to-day in honor of my guest ;
And both were born on my estate, and one
Is my rough shepherd's, one my neatherd's son.
Poor youth ! he mourns, with many an artless tear,
His long, long absence from his mother dear ;
Sighs for his little cottage, and would fain
Meet his old playfellows, the goats, again.

My feast to-day, shall other joys afford :—
Hushed, as we sit around the frugal board,

Great Homer shall his deep-toned thunder roll,
 And mighty Maro elevate the soul ;
 Maro, who, warmed with all the poet's fire,
 Disputes the palm of victory with his sire.
 Come then, my friend, an hour of pleasure spare,
 And quit awhile your business and your care ;
 The day is all our own ! ”

—GIFFORD.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL EXAMPLE.

“ *Reverence to children, as to Heaven, is due.*
 When you would, then, some darling sin pursue,
 Think that your infant offspring eyes the deed,
 And let the thought abate your guilty speed
 Back from the headlong steep your steps entice,
 And check you, tottering on the verge of vice.
 Is there a guest expected ? all is haste,
 All hurry in the house from first to last.
 ‘ Sweep the dry cobwebs down,’ the master cries,
 Whips in his hand and fury in his eyes.
 ‘ Let not a spot the clouded columns stain ;
 Scour you the figured silver, you the plain.’
 O, inconsistent wretch ! is all this coil,
 Lest the front hall or gallery, daubed with soil
 (Which yet a little sand removes), offend
 The prying eye of some indifferent friend ?
 And do you stir not, that your son may see
 The house from moral filth, from vices free ? ”

REVENGE.

“ Revenge—they say—and I believe their words,
 A pleasure sweeter far than life affords.
 Who say ? the fools, whose passions, prone to ire,
 At slightest causes, or at none, take fire ;
 Whose boiling breasts, at every turn, o’erflow
 With rancorous gall. Chrysippus said not so ;
 Nor Thales, to our frailties clement still ;
 Nor that old man, by sweet Hymettus hill,
 Who drank the poison with unruffled soul,
 And, dying, from his foes withheld the bowl.”

—GIFFORD.

AULUS PERSIUS FLACCUS.

A.D. 34-62.

This poet was a member of an equestrian family ; he was connected with many of the best houses in Italy, and counted among his kindred *Arria*, the high-spirited wife of *Pætus*.* *Persius* was born at *Volaterræ*, in *Etruria*, and remained in his native place till he had attained the age of twelve years. He was then brought to Rome, where he followed the usual course of grammar and rhetoric under competent masters. In the third satire *Persius* gives an amusing account of his love of play and the tricks by which he endeavored to escape his share in the declamations which formed a weekly exercise in the Roman schools :

“Oft, I remember yet, my sight to spoil,
How, when a boy, I bleared my eyes with oil :
What time I wished my studies to decline,
Nor make great *Cato*’s dying speeches mine ;
Speeches my master to the skies had raised,
Poor pedagogue ! unknowing what he praised ;
And which my sire, suspense ’twixt hope and fear,
With venial pride, had brought his friends to hear.

For then, alas ! ’twas my supreme delight
To study chances, and compute aright
What sum the lucky size would yield in play,
And what the fatal aces sweep away.
Anxious no rival candidate for fame
Should hit the long-necked jar with nicer aim ;
Nor, while the whirling top beguiled the eye,
With happier skill the sounding scourge apply.”

—GIFFORD.

* *Pætus Cæcina*, a man of consular rank, who took part in an unsuccessful revolt against the emperor *Claudius*. His wife, *Arria*, finding all efforts to save his life ineffectual, wished that he might at least avoid the hand of the executioner. Seeing his irresolution, she plunged a dagger into her own bosom, and handing it to her husband, said calmly : “*Pæte, non dolet,*” “*Pætus, it does not pain.*”

At the age of sixteen Persius became a disciple of Annæus Cornutus, a Stoic philosopher for whom he always professed the most filial attachment. The poet Lucan was one of his most intimate associates, and he expresses enthusiastic admiration for his writings. Persius was also acquainted with Seneca, but held him in little esteem.

The poet died at the age of twenty-eight, having, as Gifford remarks, "at an age when few have acquired a determinate character, left behind him an established reputation for genius, learning, and worth." He left to his mother and sister a large fortune, to his beloved preceptor, Cornutus, a library of seven hundred volumes, and a considerable sum of money. This latter bequest Cornutus generously renounced in favor of a sister of his deceased friend.

The productions of Persius consist of six Satires, comprising about six hundred and fifty lines. His style differs from that of Horace. His love of virtue will not permit him to speak lightly while pleading her cause; he cannot smile at the vices which he abhors. He attacks them in the abstract, and the purity of his soul shrinks from the picture of corruption which Juvenal paints with such terrible power.

The earlier Christian writers have spoken with commendation of the verses of Persius. St. Augustine alludes to the following sublime passage from the third Satire :

"Dread sire of Gods ! when lust's envenomed stings
Stir the fierce natures of tyrannic kings ;
When storms of rage within their bosoms roll,
And call, in thunder, for thy just control,
O, then relax the bolt, suspend the blow,
And thus, and thus alone, by vengeance show,
In all her charms set virtue in their eye,
And let them see their loss, despair, and die !"

SENECA.

B.C. 7-A.D. 65.

This celebrated writer was a native of Cordova, in Spain, but received his education in Rome. He chose rhetoric as a profession, and attracted so much attention that he was chosen by Agrippina as tutor to her son Nero. That Seneca endeavored to control the passions of his imperial pupil, and to inspire him with virtuous sentiments, cannot be denied. It must be admitted, however, that his conduct did not always correspond with his teaching, and he failed to give the most effectual of all instruction, that of example. A Stoic philosopher, Seneca was, nevertheless, extremely avaricious, and amassed, by whatever means, a fortune which enabled him to vie in luxury and display even with his imperial master. He is also accused of an unworthy connivance with the vices of Nero, and even with the crime which crowned all others, the cruel assassination of his mother Agrippina. If, as is believed, Seneca composed for Nero the account in which the tyrant endeavored to excuse the unnatural deed, it is certainly a dark stain upon his memory.

The disgrace of the philosopher soon followed. Nero sent a party of soldiers to surround the magnificent villa of his former preceptor, who was informed that the emperor permitted him to choose the manner of his death. Upon this, Seneca caused his veins to be opened, and as the vital current slowly ebbed, dictated to his secretary a farewell discourse. As this death was lingering and painful, the dying man ordered a draught of hemlock to be prepared, and when the

poison failed of immediate effect, had recourse to a vapor bath, in which he expired.

The reputation of Seneca rests upon his writings, which are generally of a moral and philosophical character. Several, entitled "On Consolation," are addressed to different friends; there are also essays "On Anger," "On Serenity of Mind," "On Providence," etc. Several tragedies are attributed to Seneca, but they have little merit. In his prose writings we remark a certain striving after effect, and his style will not compare with that of the best writers of the Augustan age. They contain, nevertheless, many excellent maxims, and a practical philosophy of a higher and purer type than the conduct of the author would lead us to expect.

LUCAN.

A.D. 39-66.

Lucanus M. Annæus was born at Corduba (Cordova) in Spain, where his family, originally Italian, had been settled for several generations. He was related to the Senecas, being grandson to the celebrated rhetorician of that name, and nephew of Seneca the Stoic philosopher. Other members of the family are mentioned in history, and it is thought that one of his uncles, L. Junius Gallio, was the adopted son of Junius Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles xviii. 12-16.

Lucan, having completed his education at Athens, was sent to Rome at a very early age. Here his literary reputation soon excited the jealousy of Nero. The latter was accustomed to contend for the prize of poetry at the public games, and, as may be supposed,

his competitors usually came forward for no other purpose than to afford him the honor of a mock triumph. It is said that Lucan entered into a serious contest with the emperor, and defeated him publicly, being adjudged the prize. This account, which supposes an insane vanity on the part of the poet, and a heroic sense of justice on that of the judges, is generally discredited.

However this may be, Nero forbade Lucan to recite any of his compositions, a severe check at a time when these readings constituted the ordinary mode of publication. The poet was also prohibited from pleading as an advocate, and saw himself thus cut off from every path of honorable distinction.

Burning with resentment, Lucan joined the plot formed by Piso against the life of the tyrant. The conspiracy failed, and the poet received a promise of pardon on the condition that he should disclose the names of his confederates. He not only consented to this treachery, but in his eagerness to conciliate the tyrant, falsely accused his own mother of being a party to the plot. Tacitus contrasts the cowardice of Lucan with the courage displayed by Epicharis, a female connected with the plot, who bore the utmost severity of torture, and scorned to purchase relief by a false confession.

The mother of Lucan was suffered to live, but the unhappy poet forfeited the life for which he had committed so base a crime. When he knew that the warrant was issued for his execution, he caused his veins to be opened. As the tide of life slowly ebbed away, he repeated some lines from the *Pharsalia*, in which he had described a death similar to his own.

Lucan expired in the twenty-seventh year of his

age. He left several short poems ; but his fame rests upon the *Pharsalia*, a historical epic in ten books. The subject is the civil war between Cæsar and Pompey, and the overthrow of Roman liberty.

In selecting such a theme, the poet deprived himself not only of the use of machinery, but of the license necessary to the epic writer. Characters so well known, and facts so recent and familiar, forbade any attempt at poetic coloring, any invention as to plot and circumstance. Hence some have refused to consider the *Pharsalia* as an epic in the true sense of the word.

The style of Lucan is unequal, and his great beauties are marred by defects equally striking. The first book commences with a eulogium upon Nero, which can scarcely be surpassed for servility ; in other portions of the work we find sentiments more worthy of a Roman poet. The principal characters of the *Pharsalia* are Pompey, Cæsar, Cato, and Brutus. The first is exalted by undue praise, while Cæsar is unjustly depreciated. The latter becomes, nevertheless, in spite of the poet, the hero of the poem ; he is the centre of the action and the moving spirit of the whole.

Lucan's effort to relate his story in chronological order gives rise to a frequent change of scene, and thus mars the unity and interest of the plot. There is, however, such proof of real genius in the *Pharsalia* as induces the best critics to believe that, had the poet attained the experience of mature age, he might have won a name hardly second to any among the Latin writers.

CHARACTER OF CÆSAR.

“ But no such name
 Of old renown; nor glory of the field
 Was Cæsar’s ; but a valor that could brook
 No rest ; his only shame was victory won
 By aught but open force ; a spirit keen,
 And unsubdued ; at beck of sanguine hope,
 Or anger, prompt to rush ; and never slow,
 On rash occasion’s spur, to stain the sword.
 Fervid to push success ; adroit to seize
 The auspicious hour of fortune ; beating down
 All obstacles, while pressing to the heights ;
 And glorying still to hew himself a path
 Through havoc and destruction.”

—ELTON.

PASSAGE OF THE RUBICON.

“ Now Cæsar, marching swift with winged haste,
 The summits of the frozen Alps had past ;
 With vast events and enterprises fraught,
 And future wars revolving in his thought.
 Now near the banks of Rubicon he stood ;
 When lo ! as he surveyed the narrow flood,
 Amidst the dusky horrors of the night,
 A wondrous vision stood confessed to sight.
 Her awful head Rome’s reverend image reared,
 Trembling and sad the matron form appeared ;
 A towering crown her hoary temples bound,
 And her torn tresses rudely hung around ;
 Her naked arms uplifted ere she spoke,
 Then, groaning, thus the mournful silence broke :
 ‘ Presumptuous men ! oh, whither do you run ?
 Oh ! whither bear you these my ensigns on ?
 If friends to right, if citizens of Rome,
 Here to your utmost barrier are you come.’
 She said ; and sunk within the closing shade.
 Astonishment and dread the chief invade ;
 Stiff rose his starting hair ; he stood dismayed,
 And on the bank his slackening steps were stayed.

 The leader now had passed the torrent o’er,
 And reached fair Italy’s forbidden shore ;

Then rearing on the hostile bank his head,
 'Here farewell peace and injured laws!' he said:
 'Since faith is broke, and leagues are set aside,
 Henceforth thou, goddess Fortune, art my bride!
 Let fate and war the great event decide.'"

—*Rowe.*

THE SACRED WOOD.

"There stood a grove, that ne'er had felt the stroke
 Of violating axe, from age to age:
 Whose convex boughs, girdling the gloomy air,
 O'er canopied their cold and twilight shades,
 While daily suns at distance rolled away.
 No Sylvans, Fauns, or Nymphs, the woodland powers,
 Make here their haunt; but with barbaric rites,
 Strange Gods are hallowed, and dread offerings laid
 Upon their altars.

Birds with passing wing
 Tremble to light upon those forest boughs;
 The wild beasts quake to crouch them in the lair.
 No winds rest whispering on the high tree-tops;
 And from the black o'erchanging vault of clouds,
 Pale streamy lightnings straggle through the gloom.
 The trees, that never to the breathing air
 Are seen to wave, yet quiver with their boughs
 In a mysterious horror; and from springs
 Of darkest tide, the sullen waters dash
 In melancholy falls; and forms are seen
 Of ghastly, shapeless idols, jutting rude
 From the carved trunks in uncouth imagery;
 And e'en their creeping moss, and whitening hue
 Of mouldering wood, appal th' astonished eye.
 Not so we shudder at the Gods adored
 By known familiar forms; but such the force
 Of holy terrors, when we fear a God,
 Nor know the God we fear; and fame had told
 That oft the hollow caverns of the ground
 In earthquake rocked, with muttered bellowings deep;
 Fallen yew-trees rose erect; the forest glared
 Without a flame; and coiling dragons twined
 Their slippery clasps around the gnarled oaks.
 The people, in their worship, draw not nigh,
 But to their Gods resign that solitude,

When shines the sun in mid-day heaven, or night
With dark inwraps the sky. The priest himself
Shudders, approaching ; lest his glance descry
The unseen Power, the Dæmon of the wood,
Against this forest Cæsar bade them lift
The levelling axe."

—ROWE.

IV.

PERSIAN LITERATURE.

PERSIA.

THE ancient Iranian, or Persian races, formed a branch of the great Aryan or Indo-European family, and their earliest literature belongs to the time when, a simple pastoral people, they inhabited the countries known as Bactria, Media, and the northern part of Persia.

From the earliest period of their history, one to which no proximate date can be assigned, the Zend (living) language was spoken by the people, and their religious traditions, which were probably transmitted orally for a considerable period, were in great part committed to writing in this primitive dialect. The Zend and Sanskrit are sister tongues, and comparative mythology teaches us that the people whose sacred traditions have respectively taken form in the Avesta and the Vedas must have constituted originally but one family.

All that remains to us of the ancient literature of Persia is included in a single work, of which we possess only a portion, much even of this being in a fragmentary condition. The Avesta, or, as it is generally called from the language in which it is written, the Zend Avesta, is an extraordinary collection of sacred laws, legends, litanies, and liturgical forms. It is now more than a century since a Frenchman, Anquetil du Perron, called the attention of the learned to this work and to the language in which it was written. We cannot here dwell upon the adventures of this

enterprising student, and the manifold difficulties under which he obtained and deciphered the original text of the Avesta.

English scholars doubted, for a time, the authenticity of the work, and believed the language to be a corrupt dialect of Sanskrit. German philologists, however, devoted much study to the subject, and established the Zend as the most ancient of the *Iranic* dialects, standing in the same relation to modern Persian that Latin does to Italian. When in our own times it was discovered that the Zend was one of the languages of the cuneiform inscriptions, its importance was readily acknowledged; the text of the Avesta was diligently studied, and complete editions, respectively in Roman and Zend characters, have been recently published. The language is not yet fully understood; many passages of the Avesta still defy the skill of the translator, and others, literally rendered, are as incomprehensible as the text itself.

The Zend is written from right to left; it partakes of the characters of both Sanskrit and Chaldean, and possesses many elements in common with the German. Of its antiquity we can only conjecture, but we must conclude that it is centuries older than the cuneiform inscriptions. At the time of the Persian invasion of Greece, it was so nearly obsolete that the language spoken by Darius could no longer be recognized as that of the Avesta.

A portion of the sacred books were committed to writing in the dialect styled the Pehlevi (also Huzvar-esh), which is the second in course of time of the *Iranic* languages. The third is the Parsee, a dialect of southern origin, but allied to the preceding. It reached its highest development under the Sassanide dynasty,

from 229-636 A.D. After the Mahommedan conquest, the Parsee was considerably modified by the Arabic, the union of the two languages forming the modern Persian. The alphabet is Arabic, with the addition of four letters and three points from the Parsee.

Having thus alluded to the principal dialects which have prevailed in Persia, we will return to the Avesta, the only classic of the primitive Iranians. This work contains the religious system of Zarathustra (Zōroāster), the instructions he received from Ahura-Mazda (Ormūzd), and the liturgy of this worship.

Zarathustra was by birth a Bactrian, and must have lived at some period previous to the conquest of Bactria by the Assyrians, which event took place 1200 B.C. It is impossible to arrive at any degree of certainty with regard to the particulars of his life. Many writers have doubted his personal existence, but this scepticism, as Maurice remarks :

“Is connected with a vague and false feeling, that acts can somehow accomplish themselves without living agents,—that great conflicts may be transacted in the clouds and the air, without human combatants or personal leaders. In each instance we have named, it is probable we shall ultimately return to the belief of our forefathers in an actual legislator or champion, however we may confess our inability to arrive at that very definite notion of his position and acts, which they attained by supplying the chasms of fact out of the stores of their imagination, or by the opposite process of stripping legends of their poetry,—of all that gives them their worth and significance,—and so reducing them into facts.” *

However disfigured by superstition and unmeaning rites, which the great law-giver found, perhaps, among his people, and was obliged to tolerate, the Avesta

* Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy, vol. i., pp. 74, 75.

furnishes sufficient evidence that Zarathustra was a sage in the highest sense of the word—probably the most enlightened teacher that has ever risen among the Gentile nations. The mission which he proposed to himself was the destruction of the power of the Māgians, and the abolition of a form of religion which had degenerated into an open worship of the powers of evil. The ancient Iranians admitted two principles : Ahura-Mazda (Ormuzd), who was holy and beneficent, the creator of man, of the heavenly bodies, and of all good things—also of Anra-Mainyus (Ahriman), creator of the Dævas, Drukhs, and other evil spirits, of venomous serpents, of winter, storms, and of all that is evil in the corporeal and spiritual worlds.

In the earlier times worship was paid to Ahura-Mazda only ; and although the Iranians erred, in attributing independent and creative powers to the malignant spirit, the system of dualism, as afterwards developed, cannot be said to have had a place in their primitive theology. In course of time, as the early traditions became obscure, men sought to propitiate the terrible powers of evil from whom they had so much to fear. In this manner Anra-Mainyus became the deity of the people, the Dævas were propitiated with offerings, and notwithstanding some ceremonial rites practised in honor of Ahura-Mazda, there had grown up, under the influence of the Magians, a species of devil-worship whose results were equally deplorable to the moral character of the people and their temporal prosperity. Agriculture was well-nigh abandoned, and the land of Iran was little better than a barren waste. Of what avail to root out the thistles and brambles, or drain the unproductive marsh? Evil was strong, and might not the laborer incur the vengeance of Anra-Mainyus as

the reward of his ungrateful toil? To eradicate this fatal superstition, to restore the worship of Ahura-Mazda, and to teach men to overcome the powers of evil, not by slavish propitiation, but by bold conflict, such was the task this ancient legislator proposed to himself. Of his success, the history of Persia bears sufficient witness. As we shall see in the course of this article, the religious system of Zarathustra, however encumbered by puerile superstitions and a wearisome ceremonial, contains so much of sublime and primitive truth, that we cannot wonder at the hold which it took upon the best feelings of the people, or at the fanatical zeal with which the subjugated Persians defended their ancient altars and their creed against the followers of Mahommed.

Before proceeding to a brief notice of the sacred writings, it may be well to say something of the manner in which they have been preserved and transmitted to the present day. The Persians claim that at the time of Alexander's invasion the sacred books were twenty-one in number, but that in the troubled times which followed, the greater part were dispersed and lost. The existing text we owe to the zeal of Arde-shīr, a Persian officer of royal descent, who, serving in the army of the Parthian king Artabanus, revolted and possessed himself of the empire A.D. 226. The first care of this prince was to restore the national religion to its primitive splendor. He called together the Mobeds, who, by his orders, collected the scattered portions of the sacred books, whether existing in written form, or transmitted by oral tradition. The task was faithfully executed, and there is little doubt of the authenticity of those writings which are included under the general title of Avesta.

Under the Sassanide dynasty, the empire of Persia was extended and the ancient worship prevailed. On almost all the coins remaining from that period, the word *Mazdiesn* (adorer of Ormuzd) precedes the title of the reigning prince, while a representation of a fire-altar is found on the obverse.

It was reserved for the followers of Mahommed to crush forever the ancient Zarathustrian faith. Greeks and Parthians had ruled successively in Persia, but indifferent, and tolerant of all creeds, the national religion remained undisturbed. The Mahommedans, on the contrary, waged a war of extermination against the worship of Ormuzd, and in a short time the Parsees were confined to the oasis of Yezd. There lingered yet among the higher class a strong attachment to the ancient faith, whose rites were practised secretly in places remote from the capital. To this reverence of the old nobility for the religion and traditions of their fathers we owe the preservation of the mythic legends which served the Mahommedan poet Firdûsi as the foundation of his celebrated epic, the *Shâh Namêh*. *Book of Kings*

The Parsees took refuge in India about the middle of the seventh century. Here, called by the Mahommedans *Guēbres* (infidels), they have preserved, to a certain extent, their ancient worship. The sacred fire brought from heaven by Zarathustra is kept burning in consecrated places; and in some instances temples have been built over subterranean fires. The Parsees have, nevertheless, corrupted their worship by the adoption of Hindóo practices, and their reverence for fire and for the sun, as emblems of the glory of Ormuzd, has degenerated into absolute idolatry.

We will now proceed to speak of the text of the

Avesta. What claims Zarathustra may have made on the faith of his contemporaries we do not know ; but his followers have always attributed to him supernatural powers, and he was believed to have received the instructions contained in the *Avesta* in a personal interview with Ahura-Mazda. The first book—*Vendidad* (Laws against the *Dævas*), is mainly in the form of a dialogue, and each *Fargard*, or chapter, begins usually with the words :

“Zarathustra asked Ahura-Mazda : Ahura-Mazda the Heavenly, the Holy, Creator of the corporeal world, the Pure, etc.” or :

“Ahura-Mazda spoke to the holy Zarathustra.” *

In the first chapter, Ahura-Mazda declares that he created a corporeal world, in which were all things good and pleasant—rich pasture grounds, the finest cattle, and men and women, “who on earth are the tallest, best, and most beautiful. After each good thing named, Ahura-Mazda repeats :

“Then Anra-Mainyus (*Ahriman*), who is full of death, created an opposition to the same.”

Naming some particular work of the evil spirit, in this manner contrasting the action of the powers of Good and Evil.

From the prominence given to Winter, “the wind blowing from the north,” ice, hail, etc., it would appear that this portion of the *Avesta* was composed while the *Iranic* race were still dwellers in *Bactria* and the less hospitable regions of the north.

In the second *Fargard*, Ahura-Mazda gives a history of the mission of *Yima the Shining*,† the first of men with whom the Deity held converse :

* The quotations are taken from A. N. Bleek's translation of the German version of the *Avesta* by Prof. Spiegel.

† He is the same with the hero *Yama* of *Hindoo* mythology.

"The most majestic of beings, who most gazes at the sun among men ;

In the wide rule of Yima there was no cold, no heat,
No old age and death, no envy created by the Dævas.

Father and son walked along, fifteen years in countenance,
each of the two.

So long as Yima of the good rule governed."

Yima was placed upon the earth to make it fruitful,
and Ahura-Mazda gave to the hero the arms of victory,
a golden plough and spade.

"Thereupon his (Yima's) earth became full of cattle,
beasts of burden, men, dogs, birds, and ruddy, burning
flames."

The men of this happy time lived three hundred,
the cattle a hundred and fifty years. The multipli-
cation of the human race was gradual, for we read :

"Every forty years two human beings were born of every
two human beings ; a pair, one male and one female child."

Yima having fulfilled his beneficent mission, forgot
to give the glory to God, and his heart was lifted up
with pride. In another portion of the sacred writing
we find a brief allusion to his melancholy fall.

To an inquiry of Zarathustra with regard to the
most acceptable deeds, Ahura-Mazda replies :

"Where by cultivation there is produced, O holy Zarah-
thustra, most corn, provender, and fruit-bearing trees.

Where dry land is watered, or water is drained from the
too moist land.

For the earth is not glad which lies long uncultivated.

He who cultivates this earth with the left arm and the
right, with the right arm and the left, O holy Zarathustra.

To him it brings wealth.

Since with food lives the whole corporeal world, and with-
out food it dies.

When there are crops, then the Dævas hiss.

When there are shoots, then the Dævas cough.

When there are stalks, then the Dævas weep.

He who gives much corn, burns the mouths of the Dævas with red-hot iron.

To hell they go, melting like glowing ice."

The same counsels occur in a variety of forms, with endless repetition, but we have given enough to show the extreme importance attached by Zoroaster to everything relating to husbandry.

The body of the Vendidad contains the most tedious and minute instructions concerning the laws of purification, the innumerable ways by which a man or woman becomes legally unclean, as by touching or approaching dead bodies, the garments of the dead, etc., etc. The burying of a dead body in the earth, casting hair or nail-parings on the ground, etc., etc., not only obliges the guilty party to undergo severe punishment, but furnishes the Dævas with a place to hold their meetings, and to plot successfully against the Mazdayaṣnian race. A cemetery is the paradise and strong-hold of these malignant spirits.*

If the Mosaic ritual appears to us elaborate ; if even St. Paul spoke of the ceremonial of the Old Law as "a yoke which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear," it is nevertheless absolute simplicity compared with the terrible code of Zarathustra. The inspired law-giver considered it necessary to keep the inconstant Hebrews reminded of their religious duties and of the worship of God, by daily, almost hourly observances, which we know, however, to have been practicable and faithfully carried out. With regard to the Iranian liturgy, the case is different ; and it is hard to understand how life could have been endurable

* The superstition that evil spirits frequent burying grounds was widely spread among the Orientals. We would instance the "Ghouls" of the Arabian Nights, and the Dâhnas in the Indian tales of Sama-deva, *ñ*

or how its most ordinary avocations could have been carried on by a people enslaved to such a system. For every fault committed against its observances, as well as for more serious crimes, blows are the only penalty, the sentence being usually expressed in the following manner : “ Let them strike his sinful body . . . blows with the ox-goad . . . with the Craôshô charana.” * The number of blows varies from twenty or thirty to many thousand. The punishment of death is nowhere mentioned, unless the remark of certain offenders being “ fit for the hole,” refer to the punishment of burying alive, or “ standing,” as practised by the ancient Russians. †

The penalties for breach of promise or the non-fulfilment of agreements are very severe, and remind one of the remark made by Herodotus regarding the ancient Persians :

“ Amongst these (the Persians) to tell a lie is accounted the most shameful thing, and next, to owe a debt, both for many other reasons, and especially because they say a debtor is compelled to tell some falsehood.”

Plutarch says :

“ The Persians account lying to be the second of crimes, and to be in debt the first.”

Mithra, or fire, the offspring of Ahura-Mazda, was supposed to preside over contracts, so that a person breaking a promise was said “ to lie to Mithra.”

The laws with regard to the care of dogs are minute, and it is a singular circumstance that the penalty for

* It is not known what this instrument was, the Persians having no tradition on the subject.

† In this mode of execution, the victim was buried in an upright position, the head being left exposed. The unhappy wretch was thus abandoned to perish by starvation or the inclemency of the weather.

an injury inflicted on one of these animals is greater than that incurred by the striking or wounding of a man. Indeed, such was their reverence for the canine race that no circumstance appeared sufficient to warrant any violence. A dog "who gives no bark, and is not right in his understanding," may indeed be subjected to respectful constraint; but this apparently as much to guard against his injuring himself, as to protect men from his bite; the danger of which seems, however, to have been well understood.

When the authenticity of the Avesta was disputed in England, this chapter was noted as being too utterly puerile to attribute to any law-giver. It is not easy to understand why this particular passage was made the foundation of such an argument, there being many chapters in the Avesta filled with detailed instructions, which are to us not only repulsive, but absolutely irrational. The dogs so carefully guarded were of a large and powerful breed, and were naturally of great importance to a pastoral people. We read in this chapter :

"The dog have I made, O Zarathustra, with his own clothing and his own shoes ;

With keen scent and sharp teeth.

Faithful to men, as a protection to the folds.

When he is sound, when he is by the fold ;

When, O holy Zarathustra, he is in good voice,

A thief or a wolf does not come to his tribe and carry away property unobserved.

The deadly wolf, the wolf who assaults, the growing, flattering wolf."

Apart from reasons of utility, the dog was undoubtedly protected by a feeling of superstitious reverence. The Cerberus of Greek mythology was an object of terror to the shades of the departed, but at the bridge

Chinvat, leading to the Persian paradise, a dog always waited ready to guide the soul of the pure man or woman across the narrow and perilous way.

Mention is made of an unknown animal :

“The dog with the prickly back and woolly muzzle, Van-hâpâra upon whom evil-speaking men impose the name of Dujaka. Whoso kills him, O Zarathustra, he destroys his soul even to the ninth generation.”

The Udra, or water-dog, was also protected under terrible penalties. It is not known to what animals these passages refer, perhaps to individuals of extinct species. Offences like the above might be atoned for by the slaying of certain noxious creatures. Among these we find frequent mention of the “dog-bodied serpent.” This creature may, perhaps, be identical with the peculiar dog-like dragon, whose form occurs so often in Hindoo art.

Procuring fuel for the sacred fire was an expiatory work.

“Let them give ten thousand loads of hard wood, well hewn and well dried, for the fire of Ahura-Mazda, as an atonement for his soul.

Let them give ten thousand loads of soft wood, or any odoriferous wood, for the fire,” etc.

In the quantities named there would appear to be some Oriental exaggeration. We must humanely hope that this was also the case with regard to the number of blows by which the followers of Zoroaster were obliged to expiate every trifling offence.

The giving in marriage of a female relative, “a sister or daughter, one with a good name and provided with ear-jewels,” was also an atonement for sin.

The laws regarding prayers for the dead are curiously exact; the number to be recited for parents,

grand-parents, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, or cousins being nicely graduated. In every case there is a distinction made according to the character of the deceased. The number of prayers appointed for the pure man or the pure woman being doubled for sinners—an inducement, as may be imagined, for passing a charitable judgment on departed friends.

In Fargard XXI. we find an interesting relic of the old Sabeism, or star worship. It consists principally of invocations to the clouds, rain, the sun, the moon, and also to the stars, which were supposed to have been created for man, and to exercise a beneficent influence on the earth.

The Vispered and Yaçnas contain what may be termed the Mazdayačnian liturgy. It was recited for the most part by the priests only, the presence of the laity being neither required nor expected. The principal ceremonies are: 1. The consecration of the Zaotkra, or holy water. 2. Of the Bereçma, a bundle of twigs from a particular tree. 3. The offering of the Draōnas, or small round cakes, which were afterwards eaten by the priests. 4. The preparation and consecration of the Haoma, or Hom, which was the juice of a certain mountain plant, and was revered as an emblem of immortality. The Haoma was also a person or genius, to whom invocations were addressed, and who played a considerable part in Iranian mythology. It is to be feared that the beverage consecrated to him had exhilarating qualities, which would recommend it independently of any symbolic meaning.

“There growest thou among the mountains, of many kinds, O Haoma, sweet and golden.

Praise be to the Haoma, for he maketh the soul of the poor in greatness like that of the rich.”

In the hymns or Yashts, in praise or the elements and of inferior divinities, we can see, from the peculiar and uniform conclusion of each verse, that they possessed in the original a regular rhythm, and were probably chanted to the sound of musical instruments. All are, in parts, more or less obscure, and none possess sufficient interest to be quoted entire. We give a few verses from the hymn in praise of water and the other works of God :

“All the waters which are on the earth we revere, the standing, the hurrying forwards, the waters in the deeps, those which are in streams, those in hail and in rain.

All trees, the growing adorned with tops, praise we.

The whole earth, praise we.

All stars, the moon and sun, praise we.

All lights, without beginning, praise we.

All cattle, that which lives under the water, under the heaven, the birds, the wide-stepping, the beasts with claws, praise we.”

The Yasht, or song in honor of Ardvi-çûra,* is curious. We quote a few lines, as containing the only approach to a description of female attire to be found in the sacred books :

“Praise her, Ardvi-çûra the spotless, in the form of a fair maiden, one very mighty, beautiful, pure, with brilliant face, noble, wearing an out-waving undergarment with many folds, a golden one.

Ever with ear-rings, four cornered, hanging down ; a golden necklace bears the very noble Ardvi-çûra up to her fair head.

On her head binds she a diadem, one set with a hundred stars, golden, eight-sided, unusual.

Garments of beaver-skin puts she on, Ardvi-cûra the spotless, of thirty of the fur-bearing beavers, which are the finest beavers, which have the most precious colors of such

* A female divinity, one of those receiving a sort of inferior worship.

as live in the water, namely, made at the fit time of skins, shining, brilliant."

In another hymn we have some vague hints as to the Persian ideal of beauty :

" Their maidens sit in the house, adorned with ankle-jewels, with slim waists, renowned body, *long toes*, beautiful as is the wish of those to whom they are to be given."

One singular point of this description may perhaps be mentioned in contrast to the barbarous custom of deforming the feet practised even at this early period by the Chinese women.

It is remarkable, as a proof of the monotheistic teaching of Zarathustra, that he never received any form of divine honors, not even the worship accorded to demi-gods and heroes. He is a sage and saint, but no more. We read in one of the Yashts :

" The holiness of the holy Zarathustra the pure, here praise we, who first thought the good, spoke the good, and performed the good ;

Who first of the corporeal world uttered prayers against the Dævas according to the belief in Ahura ; who first of all the corporeal world showed the whole creation of the Dævas as not praiseworthy, not worthy of adoration, he the strong, the wholly good living."

In the Khordah-Avesta we have an account of the state of the soul immediately after death. Zarathustra having questioned of the first night :

" Then answered Ahura-Mazda : Near his head it sits itself down, reciting the Gâthâ Ustavaiti, praying happiness for itself. On this night, the soul sees as much joyfulness as the whole living world possesses."

The same answer being given as to the second and third night, Ahura-Mazda continues :

" When the lapse of the third night turns itself to light, then the soul of the pure man goes forward, recollecting it-

self at the perfume of plants. A wind blows to meet it from the mid-day region, from the mid-day regions, a sweet scented one, more sweet-scented than other winds."

Borne upon this wind there comes to meet the just soul a spirit in the figure of a beautiful maiden, who declares herself the image of his good deeds and the holy Law which he has observed. At length the soul arrives in paradise :

"To it speaks a pure one, deceased before, asking : How art thou, O pure deceased, come away from the fleshly dwellings, from the earthly possessions, from the corporeal world hither to the invisible, from the perishable world, hither to the imperishable, has it happened to thee,—to whom be Hail ! long ? Then speaks Ahura-Mazda : Ask not him whom thou askest ; he is come on the fearful, terrible, trembling way, the separation of body and soul.

Bring him hither of food, of the full fatness," etc., etc.

The same inquiries being made about the soul of the wicked, Zarathustra is informed that it remains also by the corpse, "running about near the head," and reciting a prayer of malediction :

"In this night the soul sees as much unjoyfulness as there is in the whole living world. When the lapse of the third night approaches towards dawn, then goes the soul of the wicked man to the impure place, recollecting itself continually by the stench.

To it comes a wind blowing from the North region, from the North region, an evil-smelling one, more evil-smelling than other winds."

Borne on this wind there comes to the unhappy soul a spirit in the form of a maiden, most hideous and hateful to look upon, which declares itself to be the image of his thoughts, words, and works—his evil life. One of the condemned questions the soul :

"How, O deceased wicked one, art thou come away from the Drukhs, etc., etc.,—how long—woe to thee ! was it ?"

Anra-Mainyus answers in the same terms as Ahura-Mazda, only adding :

“Bring hither food, poison and mixed with poison,” etc., etc.

We come now to the most remarkable of the liturgical forms, the Patets, or Confessions of sin. They show a nice sense of right and wrong. In the detailed confession, the sinner accuses himself not only of what evil he has done, but of all the wrong that others may have committed through his fault. Envy, harsh judgments, pride, despising others, self-willedness, sloth, discontent at the appointments of providence, all these offences are accounted as equally grievous with sins of act. Curiously enough, legacy-hunting is mentioned among sins to be atoned.

A verse of the General Patet runs as follows :

“That which was the wish of Ormuzd, the Creator, and I ought to have thought and have not thought, what I ought to have spoken and have not spoken, what I ought to have done and have not done ; of these sins I repent with thoughts, words, and works, corporeal as well as spiritual, earthly as well as heavenly, with the three words : Pardon, O Lord, I repent of sin.”

The following confession of faith occurs in one of the Patets :

“I am wholly without doubt in the existence of the good Mazdayaçnian faith, in the coming of the resurrection and the later body, in the stepping over the bridge Chinvat, in an invariable recompense of good deeds and their reward, and of bad deeds and their punishment, as well as in the continuance of Paradise, in the annihilation of Hell, and Ahriman and the Dævas ; that the god Ormuzd will at last be victorious, and Ahriman will perish together with the Dævas and the offshoots of darkness.”

Whatever abuses prevailed in later times, the Nikah,

or marriage prayer, proves that Zarathustra established this institution in its primitive purity. The Mobed asks the father :

“ You give her for the earth and for heaven, to be one body and one soul, mistress of the house, the chief in place. You give her, she who is of the law ; who will assist her husband, who is well conducted ? ”

The father answers : “ I give her.”

The priest then questions the betrothed :

“ Do you join with your relations in agreement for this marriage with honorable mind to promote their own good deed for the believing N. N. this contract for life ? ”

The betrothed answers “ I promise it.” The priest having asked, “ Do ye both accept the contract for life with honorable mind that pleasure may increase to ye twain,” the betrothed join hands, and the interrogatory having been repeated three times, the Mobed proceeds to pronounce the nuptial benediction, which is followed by an exhortation to the newly married couple.

FIRDUSI.

THE SHAH NAMEH (BOOK OF KINGS).

It might appear that the notice of Persian classics should close with the review which we have given of the sacred writings. The *Shâh Namêh* of Firdusi, however, although dating from the tenth century of our era, belongs in great part to the ancient and heroic ages of Persia. The mythical legends of the early Iranian kings, as well as the historical facts connected with them, were compiled by order of Yezdegird III., the last of the Sassanide monarchs, into a connected history, forming the first portion of the national annals

On the conquest of Persia, this valuable manuscript was presented, with other spoils, to the Caliph Omar. He ordered a translation to be made, and when portions had been read to him, he expressed his condemnation of the work, as treating of worldly affairs forbidden by the prophet. The *Annals*, lying neglected among the plunder, fell to the lot of an Abyssinian, who carried them to his own country as an offering for his sovereign. This more enlightened prince received the manuscript with due appreciation of its merits, and had it translated into the Abyssinian language. It was the only relic preserved from the historical and romantic literature of ancient Persia, as by Omar's command the public libraries were ruthlessly destroyed.

The *Annals* thus preserved found their way into Hindostan, and from this country were brought to Persia, and presented to the Shâh Mahmood, who governed from 940 to 1000 A.D. This prince, who was a generous, though somewhat capricious patron of letters and literary men, conceived the idea of a poem in which the history of the sovereigns of Persia should be given in accordance with ancient tradition and historical records.

Abul Kasim Mansour Firdusi, a native of Khorasan, who had already attained high reputation as a poet, was induced to undertake this great work. He was engaged upon it for thirty years, refusing during that time to accept any gratuity from Mahmood. That prince had promised him a gold dirhem (about \$2) for each line, and the poet wished to receive the entire sum at once, it being his intention to beautify his native town of Sar, and establish his daughter there in a position of ease and splendor.

The Shâh Naméh contained 60,000 verses, and the

poet expected confidently the magnificent reward which had been promised. He had, however, offended the Grand Vîzier, who, whether with the Sultan's consent we cannot say, sent Firdusi 60,000 silver dirhems. The poet was in the public bath when this paltry recompense was brought, and, yielding to the first impulse of his anger, he distributed the entire sum among the slaves and attendants. The Sultan was deeply incensed at the contempt with which Firdusi had treated his bounty, but he was soon to have more serious cause for resentment. The poet wrote a satire against Mahmoud filled with the bitterest invective. Before this production had been presented to the Sultan, Firdusi was beyond the reach of his vengeance, having taken shelter with the Caliph of Bâgdâd.

In honor of his new patron the poet added a thousand couplets to the *Shâh Namêh*. The Caliph was so much gratified by this homage that he rewarded the poet by the gift of sixty thousand gold pieces, the sum originally promised by Mahmoud. It is said that the latter, hoping to recover the good-will of the poet, sent him afterwards, with the assurance of pardon, gifts of royal magnificence. The envoys arrived only after the death of Firdusi, and the Shah's liberality was employed by his children for the benefit of his native town.

Firdusi has been called the Homer of Persia, and the name is not misapplied. The *Shâh Namêh* is remarkable for the elegance and melody of the verse, the purity of its language, and the exalted sentiments of the poet. The episodes are extremely beautiful, and that portion of the work which treats of the achievements of Rûstem has a true epic dignity.

We can only notice here those legends of the early

kings of Persia which, however unreliable as history, possess the interest which attaches to the first traditions of a race. The first book commences with the praise of Kiümers, third, or, according to some, sixth in descent from Noah.

“Great deeds I sing ! my guide, recording time !
 Imperial annals fill the song sublime—
 What chief invented first the royal throne,
 The rich *tiāra* and the splendid zone ?
 ’Twas Kiümers ! at whose auspicious birth
 A smile expanded o’er the genial earth !
 ’Twas when yon sun was moving on his way,
 From Aries to the Lamb, with brilliant ray.
 On him fair worth and spotless honors beam,
 Pure and unsullied as the limpid stream.
 Though born ’midst hills, he felt an innate flame,
 An humble chief as then, unknown to fame !
 But when enthroned, exalted high in power,
 A grateful world confessed the favoring hour.
 For thirty years the royal vest he wore,
 He clothed the naked, and he fed the poor.
 His form erect a manly lustre spread,
 As the tall cypress rears its lofty head.
 E’en at his sight the brute became serene,
 And bowed before his throne with placid mien.
 So thinking mortals, in some dome divine,
 Obedient bend before the awful shrine—
 One son he had.” *

—Book I.

This son, the hero Seämuck, adventuring too rashly in a combat with the Dævas, or Dæmons, is slain. His death is avenged by his son Hoshung, who succeeds his grandsire, Kiümers. This prince taught the arts of mining and agriculture, built cities, and introduced the worship of fire.

* The extracts from the *Shâh Namêh* are taken from the translation of Joseph Champion, published in London A.D. 1788. The orthography has been modernized, otherwise the extracts are literally given.

“ Hoshung, on whom unblemished laurels shone,
Adorned for forty years the imperial throne.
Just as a judge the legislator reigns,
And seven proud kingdoms were his blest domains.
Wide spread the virtues of his nations o’er,
And cities smiled where deserts frowned before.
Fame told the story to the wondering earth,
And nations blessed the hour that gave him birth.
He from the quarry brought the iron ore,
And taught the smith his ever useful lore.
Within the mine the sparkling gems concealed,
To gazing eyes by Hoshung were revealed ;
He formed and gave the workman various tools,
And taught the architect to build by rules.
To every valued art his thoughts incline,
To plough the waste land, or improve the mine.
Through the scorched lands he bade canals to flow,
That corn might flourish and the pasture grow.
Through every town he conduits passed along,
Supplying water to the inland throng.
Canals were taught to flow through every place,
And commerce reared aloft her smiling face.
Bridges were formed where streams obstruct the way,
Opening new intercourse from day to day.
He taught to sow the seed, to reap the grain,
The arts of tillage were his constant strain.
Fruits were the food of men till this blest time,
And leaves of trees sole shelter from the clime.
Bright-eyed religion reared her cherub face,
For piety adorned the hero’s race.
As once, attended by a gallant few,
He sought the highlands with a patriot view,
An object from afar appeared to rise,
Of form immense, and of prodigious size ;
Sanguine its face, its eyes were ghastly blue,
Its body glaring, shocked the distant view ;
Through the whole air its dire obnoxious breath
Darkness diffused, and stench like putrid death.
Hoshung with dauntless steps approached the sprite,
And seized a ponderous stone with nervous might.
The serpent reared its crest ; on, Hoshung came,
And fearless threw the stone with dexterous aim ;
The serpent bent beneath the mighty blow,
And groaning as he fled, life seemed to flow ;

The shattered stones in numerous pieces start,
 And sparks of fire emit from every part.
 Amazement seized the chief. The view, unknown,
 Of fire emitting from repulsive stone,
 First gave the pious thought. 'Bend every knee,'
 The chief exclaims, 'tis heaven's supreme decree !
 To fire celestial let us altars raise,
 For God himself his attribute displays.'
 As the high priests of Mahommed divine,
 Bend toward Mecca, to the sacred shrine—
 So the new Magi, as their prince inspires
 Bow with devotion to the golden fires.
 Hoshung's new altars charm the gazing trains,
 And oft inspired them all with fervent strains.
 Each village blessed him, each increasing town,
 With heartfelt raptures hailed their king's renown.
 From age to age his praises will be sung,
 Eternal goodness on his actions hung.
 He chased the wild ass at the early dawn,
 The kingly lion and the rapid fawn.
 He tamed the lordly bull ; to well-clothed meads
 The gentle lambkin and the sheep he leads.
 From the gray squirrel, from the rapid fawn,
 From the sly fox were skins for clothing drawn ;
 He spun the wool, explored each varied art,
 And things of use were formed from every part.
 Here the scene closes, for the gallant mind
 That labored for the good of human kind,
 Paid nature's debt."

—Book II.

The next monarch, Tahmuraz, conquers the Dæmons
 in battle. He is about to cast them, bound in iron
 chains, into the abyss, when they implore his mercy,
 and promise to instruct him in the art of writing :

"Oh ! spare us, monarch of the world,
 On us no longer be thy thunders hurled.
 Arts, that are ours, we will to thee impart,
 And own allegiance with submissive heart.'
 The king consents, impatient quite to know
 Arts, though instructed by a barbarous foe.
 The dæmons freed, fair characters impart,
 And Writing now illumined every heart.

From age to age ideas may be traced,
 And royal actions by the muses graced.
 The Roman, Persian, the Arabian style,
 The Phelevi, Chīnēsē, and Sādi smile,
 With many more. The king for thirty years
 Spread wide this novel art to all his peers.
 His name will live to time's remotest end,
 His labors proved him to mankind a friend.
 Yet though his name had reached the ethereal plain,
 Low lie his ashes, silent is his strain."

—Book III.

Jamschid, the splendid sovereign so famous in Eastern story, reigned with equal glory and wisdom for a space of fifty years. The poet relates the story of his pride and its punishment :

"But now, alas ! he thought his labors o'er,
 That art or nature could supply no more.
 He deemed himself of more than mortal birth,
 Allied to heaven—pre-eminent on earth.
 A throne resplendent now his soul designs,
 A blaze of gems on every pillar shines.
 On this enthroned, the dæmons raise the chair ;
 On this he towering rode aloft in air.
 Gazing spectators crowd from all the earth,
 And deem their prince of more than mortal birth.
 The road with gems were strewed ; his splendid day
 In festivals shall future times display.
 But now his former splendor sets in night,
 Its glory fades, and all his vaunted might.
 The muses droop the impious strain to tell
 When Jamschid thus began, inspired by hell :
 'Behold in me the monarch of the world ;
 By me all nature speaks, by me the thunder's hurled ;
 For me the dæmons all their magic spread,'
 (So vain his soul he knew not what he said.)
 His subjects too, forgetful of their God,
 Follow his mandates, and obey his nod.
 On thrones of splendor he his orders gave,
 Soft music played, and songs unnerve the brave.
 For many a year these transient glories rise.
 Once heaven his actions viewed with favoring eyes ;

But now no more before his darkened sight
 The God appears—'twas all a gloomy night.
 The day of Jamschid darkens—and no more
 His splendor rises—all his glory's o'er."

—Book IV.

The Deity, incensed at the blasphemies of Jamschid, permits that Eblis, the chief of the Dæmons, should raise up a rival in the person of Zohak, an Arabian prince. The wars which followed, and the disgrace and ruin of Jamschid, occupy considerable space.

We give the following from the description of a battle :

"He gave the signal, clouds of dust arise,
 Dark horror reigns, and many a hero dies.
 Thus when the heavens with clouds are covered o'er
 And darkness shades with horror all the shore ;
 The melting snow, descending through the air,
 Through lowering clouds, appears more white and fair :
 So the bright swords, amidst the gloom of night,
 With polished radiance beam reflecting light.
 As various angles of the well-cut stone
 Alternate play, the sparkling lances shone."

LINES ON THE DEATH OF A HERO.

"Thus Eritch died, the generous and the brave !
 Thus basely plunged in fortune's hostile wave.
 And thou, O Fate ! who raised him high in power,
 Deserted left him in the mortal hour.
 I know not, Fate, to whom thou art a friend ;
 For to no virtue wilt thy fury bend.
 To age, you languor pour through every vein,
 As fruit in autumn when o'ercharged with rain.
 You point our lives ; from thee, and thee alone,
 Grief marks the virtuous and pervades the throne.
 Many an honored king, without a cause,
 Has sunk the victim of thy adverse laws.
 Now Eritch's head, Oh ! early, fatal doom !
 Is filled with amber and each sweet perfume."

—Book VI.

DESCRIPTION OF A PERSIAN COURT.

*THE REBEL PRINCES TOOR AND SULM QUESTION THE ENVOY
WHOM THEY HAVE SENT TO THE COURT OF MUNOCHERE.*

“When seated in the tent by his command :
 Much did he question of Irania’s land ;
 Of the new king, the army and the throne ;
 What chief, what warriors, what tiaras shone ?
 And much of F’eredoon ; whate’er he knew ;
 What glorious scene presented to his view ;
 What was predoomed ; and who the king’s vizier ?
 The treasurer who of youthful Munochere ;
 What generals, statesmen, and what chiefs attend ;
 What realms he saw ; for whom the fates ascend ?
 The envoy answers : ‘ In the realms of light
 I ne’er beheld a spectacle so bright.
 Spring blows eternal through the blest domains,
 Gay as the spring on the Elysian plains.
 The floors of amber, and the walls of gold ;
 To heaven his treasures, and his gems are rolled.
 The smile of paradise around him plays,
 And floreate gardens every scene displays,
 The royal palace tips the vaulted skies,
 And near the king, lions and leopards rise.
 Beneath his throne, the globe ; the splendid chair,
 On elephants, high glitters in the air ;
 His warriors shine in one resplendent blaze ;
 The silver tābors play, the trumpets raise
 The soul to war ; so numerous is the train,
 Whene’er they march upon the martial plain,
 The earth appears to move ; their loud acclaim
 Reaches the skies, and speaks their monarch’s fame.”

—Book VI.

MODERN PERSIAN LITERATURE.

The plan of the present work precludes any notice of the modern school of Persian poetry. Among the most eminent writers are Sāadi, a moral and didactic poet, and Hāfiz, whose verses, though of high poetical

merit, conform but too well to the taste of a people who find their ideal of happiness in the paradise of the Koran. The modern Persian, with its soft and melodious cadence, is peculiarly suited to the romantic and sentimental lays which have replaced the legends of the heroic age. The great epic of Firdusi is written in Parsee, with but a slight mingling of Arabic words or idioms. He might, therefore, be styled the last of the Persian poets, the language used by later writers being so completely modified by the Arabic as to form a new and distinct dialect.

The Persians spare no cost in procuring magnificently ornamented copies of their favorite poems. These are generally transcribed on fine silky paper prepared for the purpose, and richly perfumed. The surface is powdered with gold and silver dust, while the title and margins are beautifully illuminated. The practice is ancient, as we read in the Shâh Namêh :

“On paper spotted with the leaf of gold,
Such as kings use when they their thoughts unfold,
The Monarch wrote.”

V.

CHINESE LITERATURE.

CHINA.

LANGUAGE.

THE Chinese language is distinguished from all others by its complete originality, its high antiquity, its immutability, and its wonderful diffusion over the most populous countries of Asia. It is the only primitive language which is spoken in our day, and it is undoubtedly that which transmits the ideas of the greatest number of men. Chinese, with certain modifications, is spoken in the eighteen provinces of the Empire, in Manchouria, Corea, Japan, Cochin China, Tonquin, and several islands in the Straits of Sunda.

The Chinese language is divided into two distinct branches, the spoken and the written. The written language is not alphabetical, but consists of a vast number of characters, more or less complicated. The primitive symbols were *ideographic*, being signs, or coarse drawings which were intended to represent material objects. These were in course of time so modified as to bear no resemblance to the thing signified. As the wants of the language increased, it became impossible to introduce continually new signs. They had recourse, therefore, to combinations of the primitive characters, composed in great part arbitrarily, but sometimes presenting ingenious symbols, and picturesque definitions. Natural objects, and others which can be assimilated to them, are classed together under the tree, plant, or animal which was their type in the limited number of primitive characters. In this manner, ruminants are referred to the ox; the

carnivora to the dog, etc. Thus the symbol or character denoting the name of each animal is composed of two parts; one representing the genus, the other determining the species by some sign, either of the peculiar form or habits of the animal, or the use that may be made of it. In this manner, the Chinese have formed natural families, presenting on the whole but few anomalies. Abstract ideas and acts of the understanding are variously represented. Anger is expressed by a heart, surmounted by the sign of a slave; a hand holding the symbol of the middle, designates a historian, whose first duty is to incline to neither side; and so for others. It must be remarked, however, that many symbols are entirely arbitrary. Chinese writing is ideographic and phonetic. Space will not permit us to enter into any demonstration on this point. We would only adduce one simple fact in proof of our assertion. The Pagoda libraries consist chiefly of transcripts of Sanskrit books, which the Buddhist priests learn and recite without comprehending their meaning, the sound being translated without the sense.

The idea which prevailed formerly concerning the extreme difficulty of learning to write or to read Chinese is now acknowledged to be without foundation. The spoken language presents difficulties to foreigners on account of the nice distinction of accents and aspirates, but this can be overcome by care and practice. In the vast regions over which this singular language prevails, there are differences of pronunciation, provincialisms, and even distinct dialects. It may happen that the people living on opposite banks of the same river cannot understand one another. In such cases, recourse can always be had to writing. The symbolic characters of the Chinese present the

same convenience that the Arabic numerals do among European nations. There is much both curious and interesting in the structure of the Chinese language, the varieties of the written characters, dialects, etc. On these points we must refer the reader to the cyclopædias, and to works treating of Oriental languages.

From the importance and number of its monuments, the literature of China ranks as the first in Asia. The catalogue of the imperial library at Peking contains twelve thousand titles of works with tables of contents. The number of writings of lesser importance can hardly be ascertained; and the amount of light literature floating through the country, universally read, but not considered worthy of a place in any public collection, is truly marvellous.

In library catalogues, the Chinese divide all works under four principal heads: 1. Sacred and classical books. 2. History and Annals. 3. Works relating to Arts and Sciences. In this class are included moral treatises, the familiar dialogues of Confucius, many religious and philosophical writings, and works on mythology. 4. Light literature, such as poetry, the drama, romances, and novels. Of the antiquity of this literature, we cannot speak very definitely. The Chinese have claimed to possess writings dating from 2800 B.C. Traditions or records may exist of that early time, but it is now believed that there is no extant work which dates higher than 1000 B.C., and it is only from the time of Confucius that any noticeable list of authors can be cited. The mechanical difficulties which impeded the spread of literature were of themselves formidable; as, for centuries after Confucius, the written characters were scratched or engraved on strips of bamboo. A substance composed of silk was

gradually introduced ; in the second century of our era, paper was invented, and the delicate hair-pencil, or brush, supplied, as now, the purpose of a pen. Printing came into general use about the tenth century of our era, although the invention dates probably from the seventh.

In Chinese literature, the teachings and philosophy of Confucius must naturally hold the first place. We use for convenience the Latinized name which has become familiar. The Chinese call their great sage Khoung-fou-tseu (Reverend Master Kung). Confucius was born 551 B.C., and died in 479 B.C., eleven years before the birth of Socrates. Among the remarkable historical events which transpired during his life, we may mention the return of the Jews from captivity ; the invasion of Greece by Xerxes, and the conquest of Egypt by the Persians.

Confucius was a teacher of morality, and of that wisdom which serves to guide men in their intercourse with others and in the ordinary affairs of life. The sanction of his code must be looked for in this world and in this mortal life. It has been supposed that the ancient Chinese had some vague idea of one supreme Being, and that Confucius himself cherished such a belief. However this may be, it is certain that he made no effort to direct his contemporaries to the worship of a personal God, and it does not seem that his followers were ever disturbed by any aspirations after higher motives or more spiritual doctrines. The Chinese have always been unmystical and material to a degree which we find it hard to reconcile with the intelligence which they display in ordinary affairs. Confucius could not have obtained the influence which he exercised during his lifetime, and which has hardly

decreased during a period of more than two thousand years, had he not been himself a Chinese, representing, notwithstanding his vast genius, only the highest type of the national character. Reverence for antiquity replaces in his code the idea of the eternal. He inculcates justice and good-will towards men, but obedience is the sum of all virtues. Of this, the first type is filial piety, and respect for the family and social relations. To establish this idea more firmly in the national mind, Confucius instituted various annual rites in honor of deceased ancestors, which in the course of time degenerated into idolatry. Good government, and education as a means to that end, appears to have been his leading thought. That he effected much for the people among whom his lot was cast, we cannot doubt. Men whose religion is little better than a cultivated atheism, have certainly gained by a code which, however defective, impressed upon their character a reverence for antiquity, for the principle of authority, and the domestic and social relations.

The word heaven, and phrases such as the “command of heaven,” the “will of heaven,” occur frequently in the discourses of Confucius: but it is doubtful whether he did not use the expressions in as vague a sense as do his followers at the present day. Of the wants of the Confucian system, Maurice remarks :

“A mystical rationalism and the Buddhist divinity have been both called in to help out the cold atheism of the authorized creed. But the true Confucian feels, and feels rightly, that these plants are not indigenous to the Chinese soil, and have no rightful affinity with it. He still clings to his classical books, learns them by heart, dwells on the rules of equity, the contempt of money, the reverence for anti-

quity which they enforce ; shows, by the contradictions of his acts and life, what truth there is in these maxims, and what powerlessness ; how faithfully they foretell the decline of a country in which they are not obeyed ; how utterly unable they are to produce obedience. The philosophers of the last century had a right to point to the existence of China through so many centuries, with all its mechanical appliances, its early maturity, its political experience, and to say, 'See what can be effected by mere intelligence, content to dwell upon the earth, aspiring to no acquaintance with things divine.' We accept their words and their example. Such intelligence could do this ; so God has willed. Alas for human beings, if there is nothing which can do more !''

A more ardent if not a greater intellect appeared in the fourth century before our era. Far less in harmony with the national character, Meng-tseu* engages our sympathy by his ready humor, his dislike of anything approaching to oppression or injustice, and his freedom in proclaiming the boldest truths to men in power, even to the sovereigns themselves. As an example we will give a conversation between Meng-tseu and Siouan-Wang, the king of Tshi :

"The king interrogated Meng-tseu in these terms : 'I have been told that the park of the king Wen-Wang was seven leagues in circumference ; was that the case ?' Meng-tseu answered respectfully, 'History tells us so.' The king said, 'If so, was not its extent excessive ?' Meng-tseu answered, 'The people considered it too small.' The king said, 'My insignificance has a park only four leagues in circumference, and the people consider it too large ; whence this difference ?' Meng-tseu answered, 'The park of Wen-Wang contained all these leagues, but thither resorted all persons who wanted to cut grass or wood. Thither went all who wanted to take pheasants and hares. As the king had his park in common with the people, the people thought it small, though it was seven leagues round. Was that wonderful ? I, your servant, when I was about to cross the frontier, took care to inform myself of what was especially

* This philosopher is sometimes known as Mencius.

forbidden in your kingdom before I dared to venture farther. Your servant learnt that there was within your line of customs a park four leagues round, and that the man who killed a stag there, was punished with death ; as if he had killed a man. So that there is an actual pit of death four leagues in circumference opened in the heart of your kingdom. The people think that park too great. Is it wonderful? ”

The same monarch, in another conversation with Meng-tseu, expressed great admiration for two lines in the Book of Verses :

“ ‘ We may be rich and powerful, but we should have compassion on widows and orphans.’ Meng-tseu answered rather abruptly, ‘ O king ! if you find them so good, why do you not practise them ? ’ The king replied, ‘ My insignificance has a defect ; my insignificance loves riches.’ Meng-tseu answered respectfully, ‘ Kong-lieon loved riches also, so he shared them with his people that he might gratify his love. If you love them, try the same plan.’ ”

Meng-tseu is the author of the Fourth Classical Book, and the teachings of Confucius lose much of their cold formality in the commentaries of his follower. He quotes Confucius as saying “ that the most honest men of the neighborhood are the pests of virtue.” Meng-tseu, in answer to the questions of a disciple, explains the meaning of Confucius :

“ Those are they who take pains never to speak or act otherwise than all around them. If you wish to find them in a fault, you never know where to take them. Whatever side you attack them, you never get at them. That which dwells in their heart has a certain resemblance to rectitude and sincerity ; what they practise seem like acts of temperance and integrity. As all their neighborhood boasts of them incessantly, they fancy themselves perfect people. Therefore Confucius calls them the pests of virtue. ‘ I detest,’ says Confucius, ‘ that which has appearance without reality ; I detest clever men for fear they should confound justice ; I detest an eloquent mouth fearing lest it should corrupt the truth ; I detest the most respectable people of a neighborhood because they mimic virtue.’ ”

Notwithstanding the manner in which Meng-tseu insists on the great duty of obedience, he shows from time to time a democratic tendency which seems foreign to the true Confucian spirit. He is reported to have said :

"The people is the most noble thing in the world. The spirits of the earth and the fruits of the earth are second to them. The prince is of the least importance of all."

The pupils in Chinese schools need patience, and a wholesome fear of the master's severity to accomplish the wearisome task which lies before them in the four classical and five sacred books. In the Trimetrical Classic, the first book placed in the hands of a child, the youthful aspirant to learning is encouraged by many illustrious examples of application. We quote a few lines :

"Formerly Confucius had the young Hiang-Toh for his teacher ;

Even the sages of antiquity studied with diligence ;

One copied lessons on reeds, another on slips of bamboo ;

These, though destitute of books, eagerly sought knowledge.

To vanquish sleep, one suspended himself by the hair from a beam.

One read by light of glow-worms, another by reflection from snow.

These, though their families were poor, did not omit to study.

One carrying fagots, another with his book tied to a cow's horn,

While thus engaged in labor, studied with intensity.

You, youthful readers, should now resolve to be diligent.

Yung, when only eight years old, could recite the Odes.

And Pi, at the age of seven, understood the game of chess.

Tsai Wanki could play upon stringed instruments ;

Siè T'anwan likewise could sing and chant.

These two, though girls, were intelligent and well informed,

You then, my lads, should surely rouse to diligence."

The historical literature of China is more voluminous and perhaps more authentic than that of any other country. It is said that in the third century before our era, Che-Hwang-te, the first sovereign of the Tsin dynasty, conceived the idea of destroying the entire body of existing literature, excepting only works on medicine, divination and husbandry, and the annals of his own reign. He hoped by this means to go down to posterity as the founder and first sovereign of the Chinese empire. The barbarous decree was executed, although not without considerable bloodshed, but copies of the principal works were secretly preserved, so that the greater portion of the ancient writings escaped the hand of the destroyer. The most important of the historical works, the Shoo-king, counted as the second of the classics, contains the history of China from the twenty-fourth century B.C. to the Emperor Ping-wang, who ascended the throne 721 B.C. These annals were compiled by Confucius from materials already existing; but being particularly marked for destruction it has only partially escaped the rage of the imperial book-burner. Even in its fragmentary state it is one of the most important relics of antiquity.

The history of the various Chinese dynasties has been continued to our own time. While there is no reason to doubt the accuracy of these annals, it is to be regretted that they are barren of all that detail and variety which render the works of Herodotus, and other western historians, so delightful a study.

The scientific works of the Chinese are not of a nature to require especial notice. It is true that in ancient times eclipses were sometimes predicted, but their calculation was not based upon scientific princi-

ples, and the first Europeans who penetrated into the empire found the Chinese ignorant of the simplest principles of what they term *tien-wen*, or celestial literature. The reigning emperor, one of the first sovereigns of the Mantchou dynasty, availed himself of the services of these early missionaries, who prepared a calendar, and instructed the learned men in the drawing up of almanacs. In a curious proclamation of this period, the people are informed that the foreign teachers are received at court only on account of their knowledge of mathematics and astronomy; but that all are warned against their religious teachings, which are barbarous and utterly unworthy of credit. Since the Tribunal of Mathematics has been deprived of this foreign aid, the members have relapsed into their former ignorance, and the government is obliged to send the almanac each year to Canton to be corrected by Europeans.

The Chinese are not entirely deprived of that great organ of contemporary history, a daily press. The *Pekin Gazette* is printed every day in pamphlet form; it contains from sixty to seventy pages, and as the subscription does not amount to three dollars per annum, all who please may keep themselves informed of the tenor of public events. The *Gazette* contains the official document, of the day, memorials presented to the emperor, his replies, proceedings of the high courts, etc., etc. The emperor is supposed to approve of each article before it goes to press, and, as may be supposed, editorials and political discussions are entirely unknown.* The Chinese are quite indifferent on these points, and the idea that any one should

* Provincial journals are permitted to give reprints from the *Pekin Gazette*.

interest himself in politics without a distinct prospect of emolument appears to them extremely absurd. M. Huc relates that, stopping at an inn near Peking in 1851; at the period of the death of the Emperor Tao-Kouang, he endeavored to draw his fellow travellers into a political discussion. He spoke of the death of the emperor, of the succession to the imperial throne, which was not yet declared, questioned as to what line of policy the new sovereign was likely to pursue, and made every effort to elicit some opinion from one or other of his party. They, meantime, continued tranquilly occupied with their pipes and tea. M. Huc continues :

“This apathy was really beginning to provoke us, when one of these worthy Chinese, getting up from his seat, came and laid his hands on our shoulders in a manner quite paternal, and said, smiling rather ironically: ‘Listen to me, my friend! Why should you trouble your heart and fatigue your head by all these vain surmises? The Mandarins have to attend to affairs of state; they are paid for it. Let them earn their money, then. But don’t let us torment ourselves about what does not concern us. We should be great fools to want to do political business for nothing.’”

“‘That is very conformable to reason,’ cried the rest of the company; and thereupon they pointed out to us that our tea was getting cold, and our pipes were out.”

The *Li-ki*, or Book of Rites, contains the rules of the elaborate ceremonial which is observed by the Chinese of all classes; mingled, however, with illustrative stories, and lessons regarding minor points of social morality.

The *Shi-king*, or Book of Odes, is one of the most interesting of the Chinese classics. These poems are of undoubted antiquity, and it is claimed that the greater portion of them were collected and arranged by Confucius. It does not appear that the Chinese

have at any time ventured into the region of epic poetry ; but in simple odes and songs they have been successful to a degree we should hardly have expected from their unimaginative character. Nature will, however, suggest fitting thoughts to those who observe her changing moods, and genius is generally accompanied by depth of feeling and delicacy of sentiment. In the following lines from an ancient poem, the snow in the trees is compared to the blossoms of the wild plum :

“Icy flakes are falling fast
Through the chilly air, and now
Yonder trees, with snow bloom laden,
Do assume the wild plum’s guise,
With their mass of snowy flowers,
Gladd’ning winter’s dreary time.”

We give also a few verses which display a boldness of imagery that can scarcely be surpassed :

“See the five variegated peaks of yon mountain connected
like the fingers of the hand
And rising up from the south, as a wall midway to heaven ;
At night, it would pluck, from the inverted concave, the
stars of the Milky Way ;
During the day it explores the zenith, and plays with the
clouds.
The rain has ceased, and the shining summits are apparent
in the void expanse ;
The moon is up and looks like a bright pearl over the ex-
panded palm ;
One might imagine that the Great Spirit had stretched forth
an arm
From afar—from beyond the sea, and was numbering the
Nations.”

A Chinese poetess, Su Hwui, wrote in the third century before our era, but of her verses there remains only an ode addressed to her husband, who had been

sent into exile. We give a few lines from the literal translation :

“When you left, as we bade good-bye, the leaves of the
 reeds were yellow ;
 Who then would have thought, that the plum boughs would
 have blossomed so oft ?
 Before the hall, the vernal herbage grows most rich and fra-
 grant.
 Taking the lute of Tsun in my arms, I turn me to the pic-
 tured hall,
 Where for your sake I try to play the ballad of departed
 friends.
 Sending my inmost thoughts away, they reach the northern
 bounds—
 The northern bounds—how far they are, o’erpassed the hills
 and streams.
 Along the dreary distant way, the word of a letter has ceased
 so long,
 The spring cry of the geese and storks we heard in their
 passage north,
 It seemed to me, whose friend is there, like tearing my heart-
 strings out.
 The strings of my lute were whole, but my feelings were all
 subdued ;
 My grief was at its utmost bent, while my song was still un-
 sung.”

THE FAN.

*THE FOLLOWING VERSES WERE PRESENTED WITH A FAN
 TO THE CHINESE EMPEROR 32 B.C.*

“Cf fresh new silk, all snowy white
 And round as harvest moon ;
 A pledge of purity and love,
 A small but welcome boon.
 While summer lasts, borne in the hand,
 Or folded on the breast,
 ’Twill gently soothe the burning brow,
 And charm thee to thy rest.
 But ah ! when autumn frosts descend,
 And autumn winds blow cold ;
 No longer sought, no longer loved,
 ’Twill lie in dust and mould.

This silken fan, then, deign accept—
 Sad emblem of my lot !
 Caressed and cherished for an hour,
 Then speedily forgot."

—*Dr. W. A. P. Martin.*

We conclude our notice of Chinese poetry with some verses from a popular ballad sung by women and young maidens at the tea-picking. If the picture of incessant toil which it presents awakens our pity, that feeling is deepened to horror when we learn that a large portion of these patient workers owe the boon of life to the prospect of such employment. The birth of a female infant is in many portions of China considered a misfortune, and infanticide is openly and generally practised. In districts where the culture of tea, or the raising of silk-worms holds forth a promise of profitable labor for the female portion of the family, this crime is comparatively rare.

THE SONG OF THE TEA-PICKERS.

"Where thousand hills the vale enclose,
 Our little hut is there,
 And on the sloping sides around
 The tea grows everywhere ;
 And I must rise at early dawn,
 As doth the busy bee,
 To get my daily labor done,
 And pluck the leafy tea.

At early dawn I seize my crate,
 And sighing, oh, for rest,
 Through the thick mist I pass the door,
 With sloven hair half-drest ;
 The dames and maidens call to me,
 As hand in hand they go,
 'What steep do you, miss, climb to-day,
 What steep of high Sung'lo ?'

Dark is the sky, the dusky light
Still on the hills is set,
The dewy leaves and cloudy buds
May not be gathered yet ;
Oh, who are they, the thirsty ones,
For whom this work we do ;
For whom we sweat and daily toil,
In bands of two and two ?

With morn again come wind and rain,
And though so fierce and strong,
With my basket big, and little hat
I wend my way along ;
And home once more when the leaves are picked,
And everybody sees
How muddy all our dresses are,
And dabbled to the knees !

The rain is o'er, the outer leaves
Their grassy fibres show,
Shake down the branch, and the fragrant scent
About us 'gins to flow ;
Gather the yellow golden threads
That high and low are found—
Ah, what a precious odor now
Is wafted all around !

Oh, for a month I weary
To find a leisure day.
I go to pick at early dawn,
And unto dusk I stay ;
At the firing-pan till midnight
I hold my irksome place ;
But may not labor hard as this
Ruin my pretty face ?

But if my face be somewhat lank,
More firm shall be my mind,
I'll fire my tea that all shall be
My golden buds behind.
And yet the thought arises who
Shall the pretty maiden be,
To put the leaves in her jewelled cup,
From that cup to drink my tea ?

Her griefs all flee as she makes the tea,
 And she is glad, but oh,
 Whence shall she learn the toils of us
 Who labor for her so ?
 And shall she know of the winds that blow,
 And the rains that pour their wrath,
 And drench and soak us through, as though
 We were plunged into a bath.

Together trudge we, and we pass
 The lodge of the southern bowers
 Where the beautiful sea-pomegranate waves
 All its yellow flowers ;
 Fain would we stop and pluck a few
 To deck our tresses gay,
 But the tree is high, and 'tis vain to try
 To reach the tempting spray.

The pretty birds upon the bough
 Sing songs so sweet to hear,
 And the sky is so delicious now,
 Half cloudy and half clear ;
 While bending o'er her work, each maid
 Will prattle of her woe,
 And we talk till our hearts are sorely hurt,
 And tears begin to flow.

Our time is done, and yet not full
 Our baskets to the mouth,
 The twigs anorth are thoroughly searched,
 Let's seek them in the south ;
 Hei yah ! just then I snapped a twig
 Whose leaves grew sweet apair ;
 See, with my taper fingers
 I fix it in my hair.

Oh, various are the kinds of tea,
 There's bitter, and there's sweet ;
 But whoever has a fancy,
 For him I'll find a treat ;
 But who it is shall drink them,
 As bitter or sweet they be,
 I know not, friend—but the pearly ends
 Of my fingers only see !” —*T. W. Mercer.*

The dramatic literature of the Chinese far exceeds in volume that of any other nation, but of true dramatic art they have hardly acquired the elementary principles. It sometimes happens in the higher class of dramas that each character introduces himself to the audience, declaring his name, the circumstances in which he is placed; how he proposes to act, etc. In this manner the greater part of a play consists of tedious monologue. It cannot be denied that some of these speeches contain passages of real merit, but the general effect and the life of the drama are necessarily destroyed. There is no scenery, and this want is not supplied, as with the Hindoos, by vivid poetic description. A person setting out on a journey informs the audience of the fact, and a moment after exclaims: "Now, I have arrived. This the town. —"

The first Chinese drama made known to Europeans was "The Orphan of Chau," translated by Père Prémare in 1731. This was afterwards taken by Voltaire as the ground-work of one of his plays.

The Chinese delight extremely in the farces which are played as interludes to the more serious pieces. These depend for their success on the comic gesticulation and pantomimic action of the performers; also on the impromptu wit in which they are permitted to indulge. In the department of novels and romances, there is nothing sufficiently peculiar or characteristic to call for a particular notice.

VI.

JAPANESE LITERATURE.

JAPAN.

THE Japanese language belongs to the polysyllabic branch of the Mongolian or Turanian group. It had originally no written character, the alphabet or syllabary having been invented in the ninth century, when the Chinese characters had already passed into common use. The art of writing was introduced from *Corea* to Japan at a comparatively early date, but the most ancient literary monuments and inscriptions belong to the seventh or eighth century. The syllabary was invented by Kōbo Daishi, a learned Buddhist priest; it contains forty-seven characters, and these are sometimes introduced with the Chinese symbols.

The Japanese language has no natural affinity with the Chinese, but the two idioms have been, by force of circumstances, so blended that there is hardly to be found a Japanese word which has not its Chinese equivalent. The ancient conquerors of Japan were intelligent and warlike, but ignorant of the arts and appliances of civilized life. These they received from the Chinese, and new words were continually adopted to supply the deficiencies of the national vocabulary. Hence it comes that the ancient Japanese occupies much the same place in the language now spoken by the people that Anglo-Saxon does in English. Specific and concrete terms, family relationships, and those words which express the wants and feelings of every-day life, are still Japanese; but abstract, generic, technical, scientific, and philosophic terms, belong generally to the foreign idiom. While Chinese words

abound in the higher literary compositions, and in the conversation of the educated classes, the common people speak the native language almost in its primitive purity. As we only propose to glance briefly at the subject of Japanese literature, we can say nothing of the grammatical structure of the language, nor of the manner in which Chinese words, retaining their full integrity, are made to combine with those of an idiom so widely different.

For the reasons which have been mentioned, Japanese literature is comparatively modern, dating from the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The poetry of earlier times, which was transmitted orally, appears to have been of the simplest construction, and even at the present day the art of versification has made but little progress. Of the poetic relics of ancient times we have no means of forming a correct judgment, and many, even of the works of the mediæval period, still await the modern spirit of research, and the skill of the translator. It would appear that in this period of Japanese history the national literature was chiefly cultivated by women of the higher rank. The Buddhist priests usually made Chinese the vehicle of their teachings, while the feudal nobility had not yet learned that it was possible to entertain a doubt as to the respective value of the pen or the sword.

At the court of Kiôtō the composing and reciting of verses was a common pastime with both sexes. The emperor frequently honored the nobles and court ladies by giving them subjects on which to exercise their poetic skill; and a thought happily expressed, an ingeniously wrought stanza, sometimes raised an undistinguished retainer to the highest offices of the court, or a lady of honor to share the imperial throne.

The reading or relating of original stories was another favorite amusement of this idle and luxurious court, and the Japanese *Monogatari*, or novel, took its rise in these literary pastimes. It is related that on one occasion, the empress-dowager having expressed a desire to read something new and entertaining, — Murasaki, daughter of the Lord of Echizen, was requested to write some stories. The Japanese have always entertained a high idea of the effect produced upon the imagination by beautiful scenery, and Murasaki determined to avail herself of this source of inspiration. She caused a high tower to be erected overlooking lake Biwa, and one evening, when the moon shone upon the waters and the mountain scenery around, she was so excited by the view that on that same night she wrote two chapters of the *Genji Monogatari*, which she finished in the course of a few weeks. The empress-mother was so highly pleased with the romance that she presented it to her son, and the work ranks to this day among the Japanese classics.* Several court ladies of this time have left poems which are highly esteemed, and Mr. W. G. Aston justly remarks, as an extraordinary fact, “that a large proportion of the best writings of the best age of Japanese literature was the work of women.”

Japan possesses a rich fund of popular stories, replete with the characteristic superstitions of its people and affording, perhaps, a better idea of their habits and manners than can be obtained either from the dry details of the national annals, or the necessarily superficial observation of foreigners. The Japanese are associated in our minds with their continental neigh-

* See ‘*Mikado’s Empire*,’ by Prof. W. E. Griffis, p. 201 et seq.

bors, and it is only within a few years that we have learned how wide is the difference of national types. The Japanese has never entirely crushed the higher aspirations of the human soul, and the cold materialism of the Chinese is completely foreign to his nature. Dissatisfied with the Shinto, the so-called religion of its ancient people, Japan welcomed eagerly, in the sixth century, the teachings of the priests of Buddha. Even this system was modified, and made more definite and real, to meet the requirements of its new followers. To this naturally religious disposition was due the astonishing success of the Christian missionaries in the sixteenth century. Another trait of character is brought out in bold relief by these popular tales, many of which have, like the famous story of "The Forty-seven Ronins," a basis of historic truth. We allude to the readiness of the Japanese to sacrifice their lives, either to avoid some personal disgrace, to testify their fidelity, or to fulfil some fancied duty towards their feudal lords. In some cases there is a rude self-devoted heroism which awakens our sympathy, and the motives for suicide are generally of a nobler order than those which actuate the Chinese.

The social code of honor, which obliged the Japanese in so many circumstances to take his own life, was one of the gravest difficulties which had to be encountered by the Christian missionaries. The newly-converted noble was willing to die for the confession of his faith, but it was sometimes difficult to make him understand that he was obliged to renounce the privilege of his caste, and submit to the hand of the executioner. It is related that a young princess who had been converted to Christianity, received, in her husband's absence, the sentence of death. She directed herself the arrange-

ments usual in such cases, and was preparing joyfully to meet her end, when she learned that the members of her household, by whom she was much beloved, had resolved not to survive her. It was in vain that she assembled her retainers, and conjured them with tears, using every argument drawn from reason and natural religion to desist from their fatal purpose. Her words had no effect, and the chief officer of the palace exclaimed that they had done well not to embrace a religion which obliged its followers to stifle every sentiment of honor and gratitude.

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